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65

Poolside at Villa Sheherezade, on Croatia's Dalmatian Coast, designed by Dimorestudio.

PHOTOGRAPHER: ANDREA FERRARI

16 *Contributors*
18 *Visit Vogue Living online*
20 *Editor's letter*

22 *Modern femme*
Designer Tamsin Johnson and tailor Patrick Johnson's atelier for PJ Femme is different to anything the couple have dreamt up before

28 *New wave*
Cartier's new flagship home in Sydney has a proudly Australian aesthetic running through it that is most definitely by design

34 *Poetry in motion*
Photographer Sharyn Cairns sought out architect Kerstin Thompson to conjure a contemporary Victorian beach house

40 *Lock and key*
An ongoing collaboration between artist Daniel Arsham and jewellery house Tiffany & Co. is the perfect amalgamation of creativity, heritage and craftsmanship

46 *Subscribe to VL*
Subscribe for only $65 a year and you can gain access to our exclusive rewards program, *Vogue* VIP

48 *The VL edit*
A curated hit list of new feature pieces and accessories that have caught our eye, including Kartell's latest release of punchy designs by Ettore Sottsass

65 *Vivid dream*
A villa set on the Croatian coastline with an indelible tale of its own has its next chapter written by purveyors of layered heritage narrative Dimorestudio

82 *The grand escape*
Welcome to Donhead House, Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson's painstakingly revived holiday retreat in the English countryside

98 *Easy charm*
Building upon the character of a Federation house, Decus focuses on getting the balance right for a family through detail and relaxed living

82

In the Green Room of Donhead House, Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson's holiday home designed by Philip Joseph in the English countryside.

110 *Artistic spirit*

Within a 16th-century farmhouse, Luca Bombassei's monumental art collection and life's passion find sanctuary and ceremony

124 *Living colour*

A family looked to specialists of tone and character Arent&Pyke to turn over a new leaf in their bright Sydney home

134 *Upon reflection*

Once a getaway for a young Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Lasata is now an East Hampton escape enhanced by Pierre Yovanovitch's refined vision

150 *Become a Vogue VIP*

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134

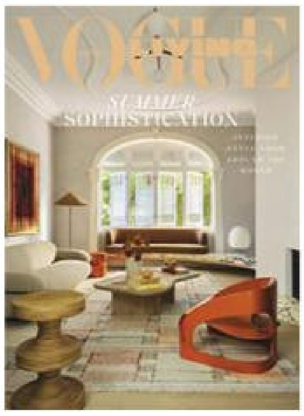
In the sun porch of Lasata, an East Hampton holiday home revitalised by designer Pierre Yovanovitch.

164 *Unbreakable bond*
Kisawa Sanctuary doesn't only just declare Mozambique as a gateway to an abundance of wildlife; it also showcases a sustainability minded way to travel that is intrinsically linked to and profoundly celebrates its community and heritage

172 *The VL Edit*
A curated hit list of refined accessories for those who travel in style, from top to toe

174 *Sources*
Contact details for the products, people and retailers featured in this issue

176 *Light and shade*
Inspired by the detail of Carlo Scarpa's designs and the artistry of brutalist style, the new Rilievo range from Tigmi highlights geometric forms



ON THE COVER
The living room of a Mosman family home designed by Decus.
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Sharyn CAIRNS

The noted photographer turned the lens this issue onto her own holiday retreat on the Victorian coast designed by architect Kerstin Thompson (*page 34*). ***What does the notion of escape mean to you?*** Putting that holiday auto-responder on and heading down to the coast. It's a time to relax and recharge so I can come back creatively inspired for the coming year. ***What three elements were key to the creation of your holiday home?*** Great collaborations with talented people, beautiful light that dances across the concrete walls, and the perfect setting among the landscape. ***What immediately brings you a sense of calm?*** Nothing is more rejuvenating than being in nature. As soon as I see the coastline, everything melts away. ***How will you be spending your summer break?*** Relaxing! I've been fortunate to have travelled a lot with work so I'm excited to have an Australian summer by the beach: hiking in the Otways, swimming in the ocean and enjoying the bath views. ***@sharyncairns***

Joseph GARDNER

Vogue Living's style editor brought his exacting eye to our cover, balancing colour and striking statement pieces in a space that encompasses the sanctuary of home. ***What does the notion of escape mean to you?*** The notion of escape for me is something that can come from complete pause; quiet, reflective moments of perfect nothingness but it can also come from something super energising, wild and free. ***What immediately brings you a sense of calm?*** Uncomplicated spaces with soft light, raw textures, a calming palette and zero clutter. ***How will you be spending your summer break?*** Working on personal projects, spending time with friends and family, cooking, drinking and reflecting. ***Any holidays in the pipeline?*** I'm looking forward to returning to Milano next year for Salone, my first time back since 2019. I love that city. My partner and I will then go on to explore other regions. ***@joseph_gardner***

Amy CAMPBELL

This talented writer delved into Tamsin and Patrick Johnson's sumptuous world of PJ Femme (*page 22*) this issue. ***What does the notion of escape mean to you?*** I think 'escape' has less to do with a place, and more a state of mind. So long as I feel present and relaxed, I could be anywhere yet feel like I've escaped. ***What three elements are key to a retreat?*** Sunshine, proximity to nature and a tall stack of really good novels. ***What immediately brings you a sense of calm?*** Slipping into a warm bath. Even in the warmer months, I find it calms my mind. ***How will you be spending your summer break?*** With family and friends. 2022 has been a roller-coaster, so I'm looking forward to relaxing and recharging by the beach. After so many soggy summers, I'm hoping the east coast gets some sun this year! ***Any holidays planned for the near future?*** I haven't technically booked it yet, but I think it's safe to say a stay in Majorca is in the pipeline for 2023. ***@amycammpbell***

EDITED BY VIRGINIA JEN. PHOTOGRAPHERS: SHARYN CAIRNS (SHARYN CAIRNS), SU SHAN LEONG (AMY CAMPBELL)

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By YEONG SASSALL *Photographed by* ANSON SMART *Styled by* OLGA LEWIS

This sky-high Sydney CBD penthouse is nestled between the heritage-listed Hinchcliff House and AMP Building, offering jaw-dropping views of Sydney Harbour and Circular Quay. Imagined as the ultimate city pad for entertaining and relaxation, its owner called upon Thomas Hamel & Associates to enliven this new build. Drawing on a number of bold architectural elements, such as panelling, ebonised timber doors, brass detailing and a large sweeping staircase, the apartment embodies the richly textured opulence of a New York City pied-à-terre.

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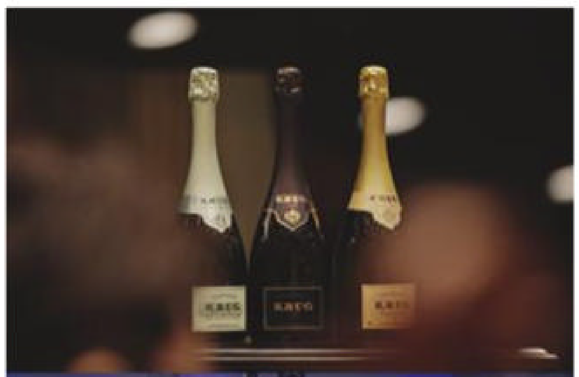
A

Above award-winning composer, artist, producer and environmental activist Ryuichi Sakamoto introducing his *Suite for Krug in 2018* score preceding its performance in Tokyo. ***Below*** the trio of champagnes from the 2008 harvest that inspired Sakamoto's suite for the Seeing Sound, Hearing Krug experiences. ***Bottom*** a live performance of Sakamoto's *Suite for Krug in 2018* score.



As this issue goes to print, we are well and truly in the festive season. Deadlines, parties, running on adrenaline to get to the finish line — I've forgotten how much I love the end-of-year buzz after the last couple of years. I was also lucky enough to go on my first overseas trip since 2019 to Tokyo with Krug Champagne. I attended an intimate dinner and performance of legendary composer Ryuichi Sakamoto's suite in three movements, which represented a trio of the house's 2008 harvest. It was a moment to savour the power and creativity of storytelling through different mediums, an unforgettable event that will stay with me for a long time.

I also attended the opening of the new Cartier flagship boutique in Sydney, a truly spectacular retail experience that brings so much local design brilliance and beauty to the CBD. As you'll see in our story (*page 28*), Cartier worked closely with Australian artisans to produce an inspired space that celebrates both the maison's proud heritage and our nation's creative significance and standing on a global stage.

And when it comes to this time of year, our homes really come into their own as gathering spaces to celebrate and relax in. Each home in this issue embodies a calming, soothing atmosphere. We take you away to Croatia with Dimorestudio to what can only be described as my dream European holiday home — it brings together the Italian studio's layered opulence with breathtaking views (*page 65*). There is architect Luca Bombassei's art-filled masseria in Puglia (*page 110*), which is somehow both traditional and thoroughly contemporary. There are also country escapes to take in: in England, entrepreneurs Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson worked with designer Philip Joseph in revitalising Donhead House (*page 82*) while in East Hampton, Pierre Yovanovitch works his magic on Lasata (*page 134*), a holiday home where Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis spent her childhood summers.

Then there's our cover home by VL50 designer Alexandra Donohoe Church of Decus (*page 98*), a firm known for creating family-friendly homes — everyday spaces that are stylish yet liveable and offer a great balance of easy sophistication and practicality. This Mosman family home reflects just that, complete with water views.

This issue is the ideal summer read — preferably at the beach or poolside — with more awe-inspiring interiors from around the world. From myself and the *VL* team, here's to taking some precious time out with loved ones to relax, reset and recharge for the year ahead. Happy holidays and safe travels!

Rebecca Caratti

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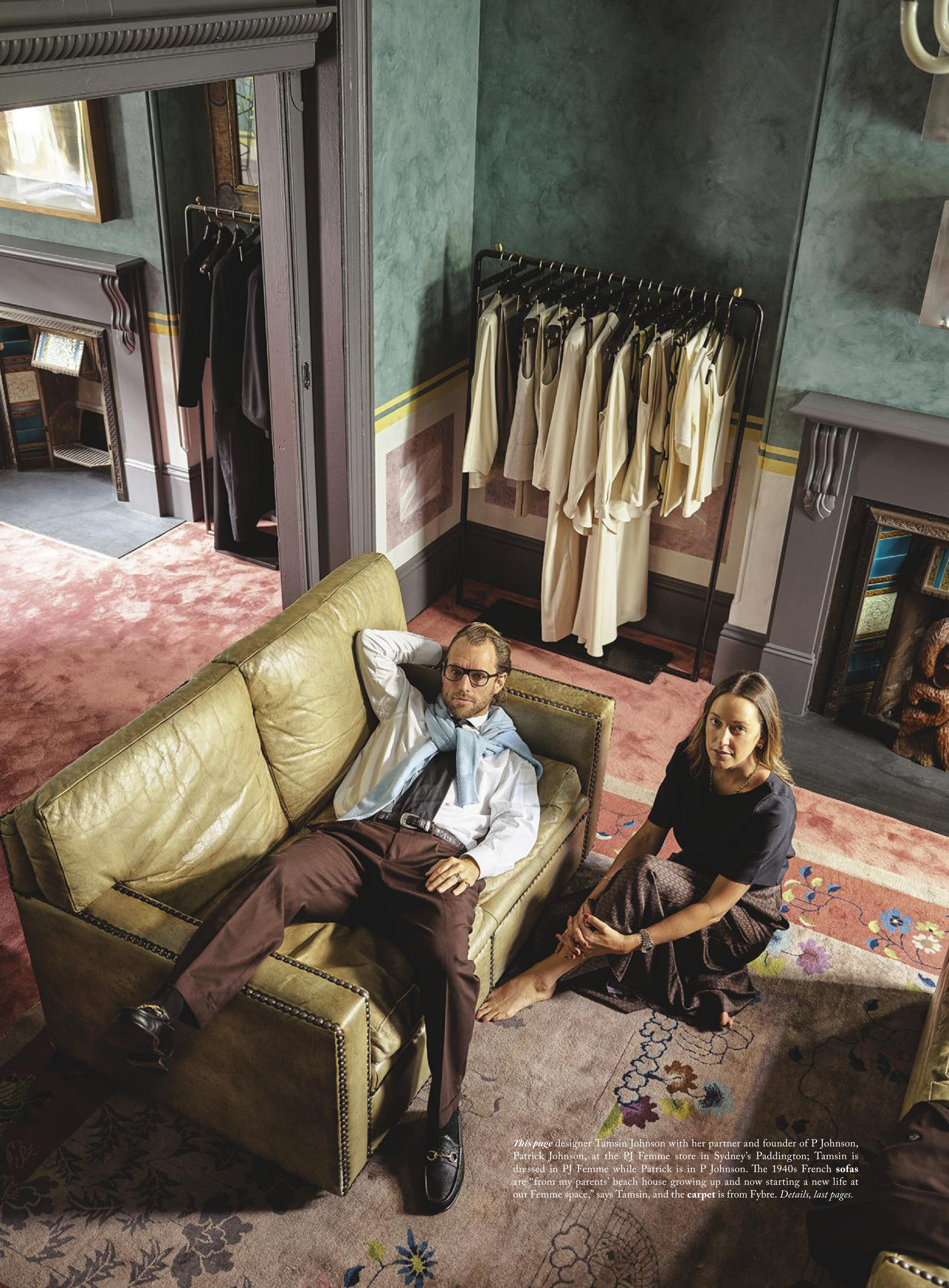
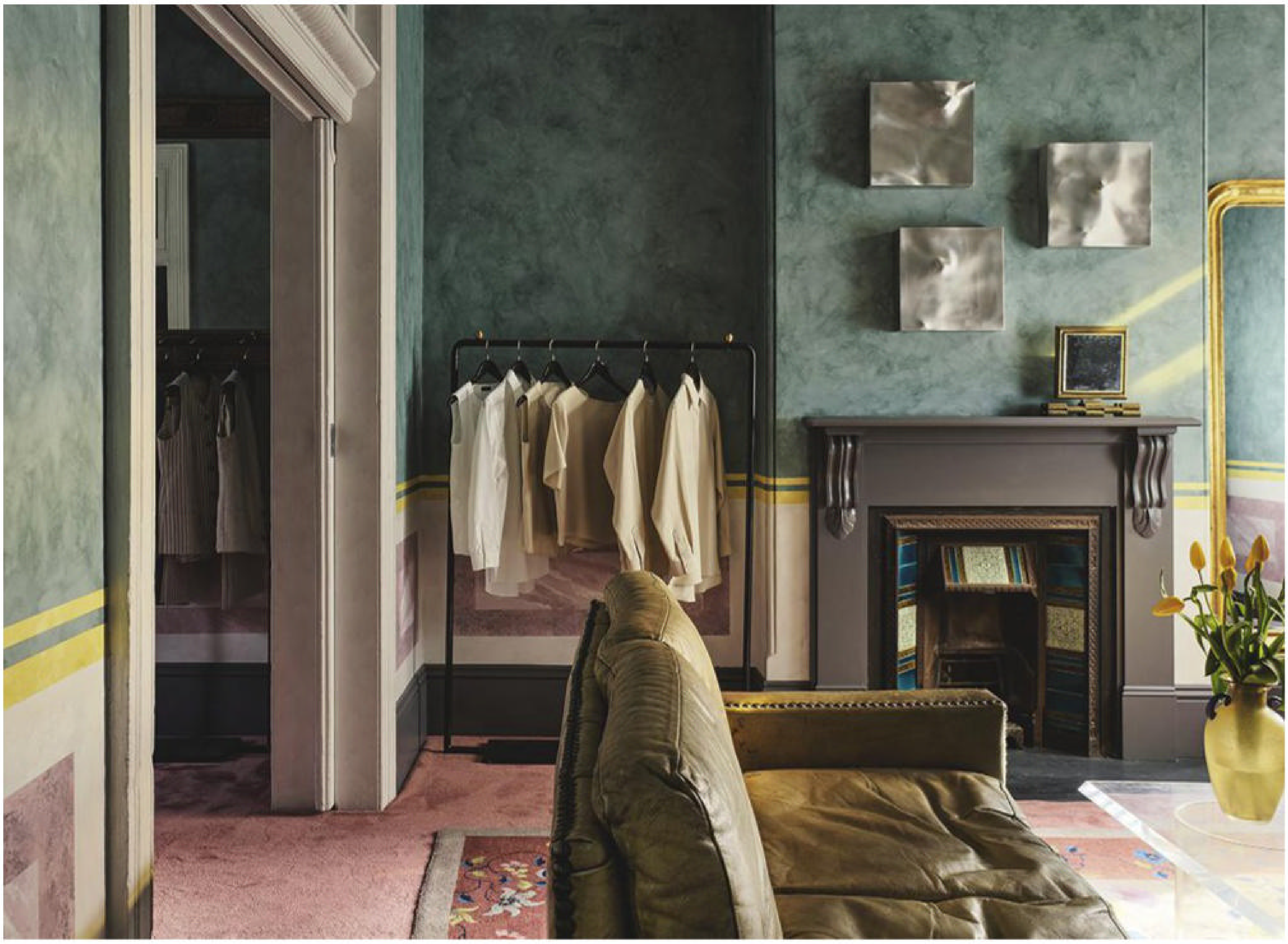
Designer Tamsin Johnson and tailor Patrick Johnson have worked together on numerous occasions but their newest project, an atelier for PJ Femme, is different to anything the couple have dreamt up before.

By AMY CAMPBELL *Photographed by* ANSON SMART

Modern Femme



This page designer Tamsin Johnson with her partner and founder of P Johnson, Patrick Johnson, at the PJ Femme store in Sydney's Paddington; Tamsin is dressed in PJ Femme while Patrick is in P Johnson. The 1940s French **sofas** are "from my parents' beach house growing up and now starting a new life at our Femme space," says Tamsin, and the **carpet** is from Fybre. *Details, last pages.*



This page in another view of the atelier, **fireplace** original to the terrace; **artworks** by Antonio Colangelo from Soho Galleries Sydney. ***Opposite page*** on the first-floor landing, 1930s French **side chairs** upholstered in pink mohair velvet; **mirrors** with mustard velvet frames; frosted glass **sculptures** from Italy; vintage Murano **vase**.

T

The American pianist Liberace is remembered primarily for his grand showmanship. But as his star soared, the musician from working-class Wisconsin developed a taste for opulence in other avenues of his colourful life, including interiors. The dream house he built in San Fernando Valley was outfitted with lavish furnishings and a generous peppering of eclectic antiques, not to mention a piano-shaped swimming pool. Opulent indeed.

When transforming the interior of a secluded Paddington terrace, which previously housed an architectural studio but would soon become the new Sydney home of PJ Femme — the sister brand of beloved Australian tailor P Johnson — interior designer Tamsin Johnson had Liberace levels of ornamentation on the moodboard.

“We wanted it to feel more embellished and feminine than the other P Johnson spaces,” she explains. “It’s such a small space, so it was about making every possible surface feel quite one-off. I like to think of it like a European gallery.”

On this occasion, Johnson’s client was someone she’s very familiar with — the founder of P Johnson tailors and her partner in life, Patrick. “Tam hates me as a client, I want everything done straightaway,” he says with a wink. “But it is interesting working with your partner on a space you’re both so close to. We’ve done a few houses together, they’re actually the easiest because our taste is pretty much the same. The retail spaces are much harder — it’s the one thing I’m pedantic about. But on this project I did let go a bit. I just said to Tam: ‘You go for it. Make it really different.’” >

This page, from left in the upstairs private fitting room, 18th-century Spanish **desk**, 1970s abstract plaster French **mirror** on 1960s lucite easel; Vintage Murano **chandelier**; French still-life oil **painting** by artist unknown. The entrance to the PJ Femme store in Paddington. ***Opposite page*** in the ground-floor front room, Carrara marble **table** by Angelo Mangiarotti; custom **drawers**; **mirrors** crafted with Italian antique frames *Details, last pages.*

< In the world of high-end retail, it's rare to find spaces that not only feel truly "different", but that provide visitors with a unique experience that borders on visiting an art gallery. But what Tamsin has created for PJ Femme feels truly fresh — from the Italian fresco-look paints in blush pink and textured teal to mirrored ceilings that create a feeling of expansiveness and the showroom's proverbial celebrity — a glass cactus-shaped sculpture by an unknown artisan the Johnsons found on their travels — this is an interior you'll find yourself wanting to loiter in, and return to.

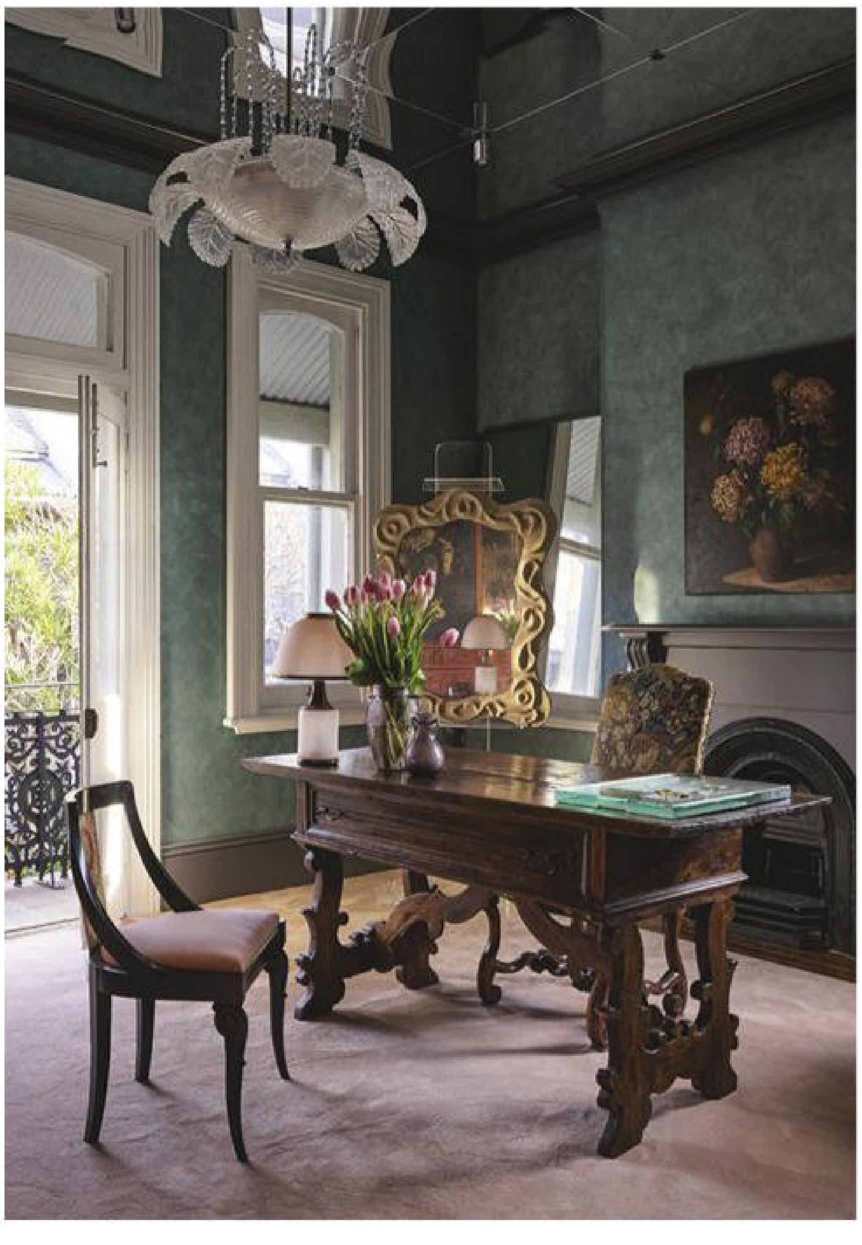
"Customers can walk in off the street, but once you get in here it's private and relaxed," says Patrick. Downstairs, where PJ Femme's ready-to-wear collection is displayed, the light is intentionally softer. "It feels a bit more like a boudoir."

> "It was about making every possible surface feel quite one-off"

Upstairs is where the made-to-measure business takes place, with tailors from P Johnson's nearby flagship stationed at the terrace for fittings. Patrick points to a 17th-century Chinese screen that elegantly forms the outline of a spacious fitting room. "We found that one from antiques dealer Ian Hadlow on William Street."

Not only is the PJ Femme showroom distinct from other boutiques, it doesn't rely on its brothers — the constellation of P Johnson showrooms dotting New York, London, Melbourne and Sydney — for design cues.

"I didn't want to create a men's suiting business for women. I wanted to create a women's business for women," explains Patrick. It's a sentiment that flows through the eclectic personality of this charming space. Save for the lack of a piano-shaped pool, Liberace would approve. VL *pjt.com tamsinjohnson.com*



New Wave

Cartier's new flagship home in Sydney has a proudly Australian aesthetic running through it that is most definitely by design.

By VIRGINIA JEN

PHOTOGRAPHER: IMAGES COURTESY OF CARTIER

These pages the opulent Opal Bar presides over the first floor of Cartier's new Sydney flagship store. Cocktails exclusively created by globally renowned bar Maybe Sammy crafted with locally sourced, native ingredients can be enjoyed at the Amazonite marble, stained timber and gold leaf-finished bar.

W

What strikes you immediately as you stand among the thrum of Sydney's CBD on the corner of George and King streets, admiring the brand-new Cartier flagship, is a shimmering facade. Inspired by both the serene waters of Sydney Harbour and the rolling waves of Bondi Beach, the impressive sheath also mirrors the refined pieces crafted by the French maison for the past 175 years with an inherent strength and presence.

The work of Paris-based interior firm Moinard Bétaille, an agency that has collaborated with Cartier to bring to life boutiques around the world, this local destination storefront presented an opportunity to herald the strength and beauty of Australia's own design heritage. The considered skill that the luxury jewellery house has built its renown upon is expressed in this boutique with the very best of Australian artisanal talent playing a vital part in the heightened retail experience.

"After enjoying a longstanding presence in Australia for more than 45 years, the opening of our new Sydney flagship marks a thrilling new chapter in the relationship between Cartier and Australians," says Alban du Mesnil, managing director of Cartier Oceania. "The new Sydney flagship will embody Parisian elegance whilst paying tribute to Australia's rich culture and natural beauty, featuring the savoir faire and style Cartier is renowned for around the world."

While undulating water has marked the exterior, Australia's red centre lays the foundation for part of the Sydney flagship. A majestic ochre-toned woven textile piece framed in Australian hardwood is the result of Indigenous artisans Bula'bula Arts and Manapan. Artist Daphne Banyawarra learnt to weave naturally dyed pandanus leaves from her mother and grandmother. She now continues this treasured practice alongside the community of 150 artists that make up the Bula'bula Arts collective, based in Ramingining in East Arnhem Land, 580 kilometres north east of Darwin. "[What] weaving means to me and to the people… it's our cultural way of living and acknowledging our totems, the environment in which we belong," she says.

Executive director of Bula'bula Arts Mel George believes this commission is a special recognition of the people that carry this time-honoured craft onwards. "What this means for the people in this community is valuing their cultural identity, Yolngu history and identity by commissioning something quintessentially Australian, sustainable and something all Australians can be proud of," she says.

For craftsman Josiah Baker of Manapan, a self-sufficient, self-funded enterprise owned and run by the Yolngu people, history and time is expressed through artistry. "Each piece we make, the carving represents different parts of places," says Baker. "It tells stories about time back then and now and how everything is changing — we do carvings that represent different places, the beginning of time, the end of time, nature itself."

Nature also defines the handmade pendant lights that read more like art installations by Melbourne-based industrial designer Christopher Boots and his team, who already have pieces illuminating Cartier boutiques from Shanghai to New York City. The synergy of jewellery with the craft behind design is perhaps realised in its purest form here. "The brief, calling for the unexpected, offered an opportunity for experimentation — something we relish — and the outcome reflects our shared reverence for materiality and the allure of luxury design," says Boots. "Each custom fixture features our signature quartz crystal paired with sand-cast bronze; a true labour of love creating jewellery for the home, sustaining Cartier's unique vision and the exacting standards of our studio." It is this stance on distinctive creativity and exacting quality that results in a flagship, as du Mesnil describes it, "offering clients a unique experience full of discovery". **VL** *cartier.com.au*

Cartier's new Sydney flagship boutique is located at 388 George St, Sydney.

Opposite page, from top the polished champagne-toned facade of the Cartier Sydney flagship boutique. The ground floor is marked by an impressive central staircase, the Cartier panther realised in leather, fabric and finishes by Di Emme with straw marquetry by Alexander Lamont. A sculptural chandelier by designer Christopher Boots illuminates the space.

PHOTOGRAPHER: IMAGES COURTESY OF CARTIER

Cartier

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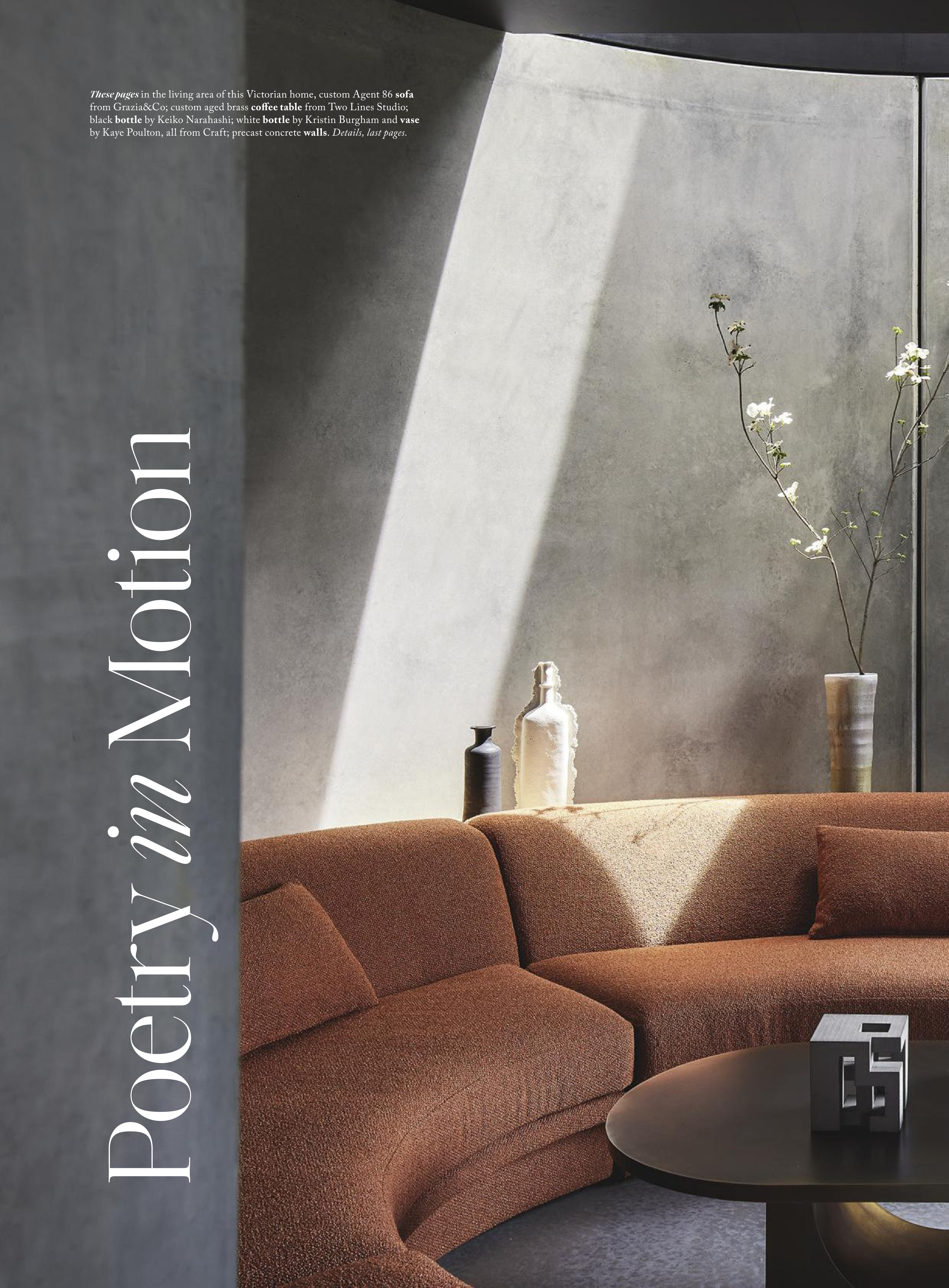
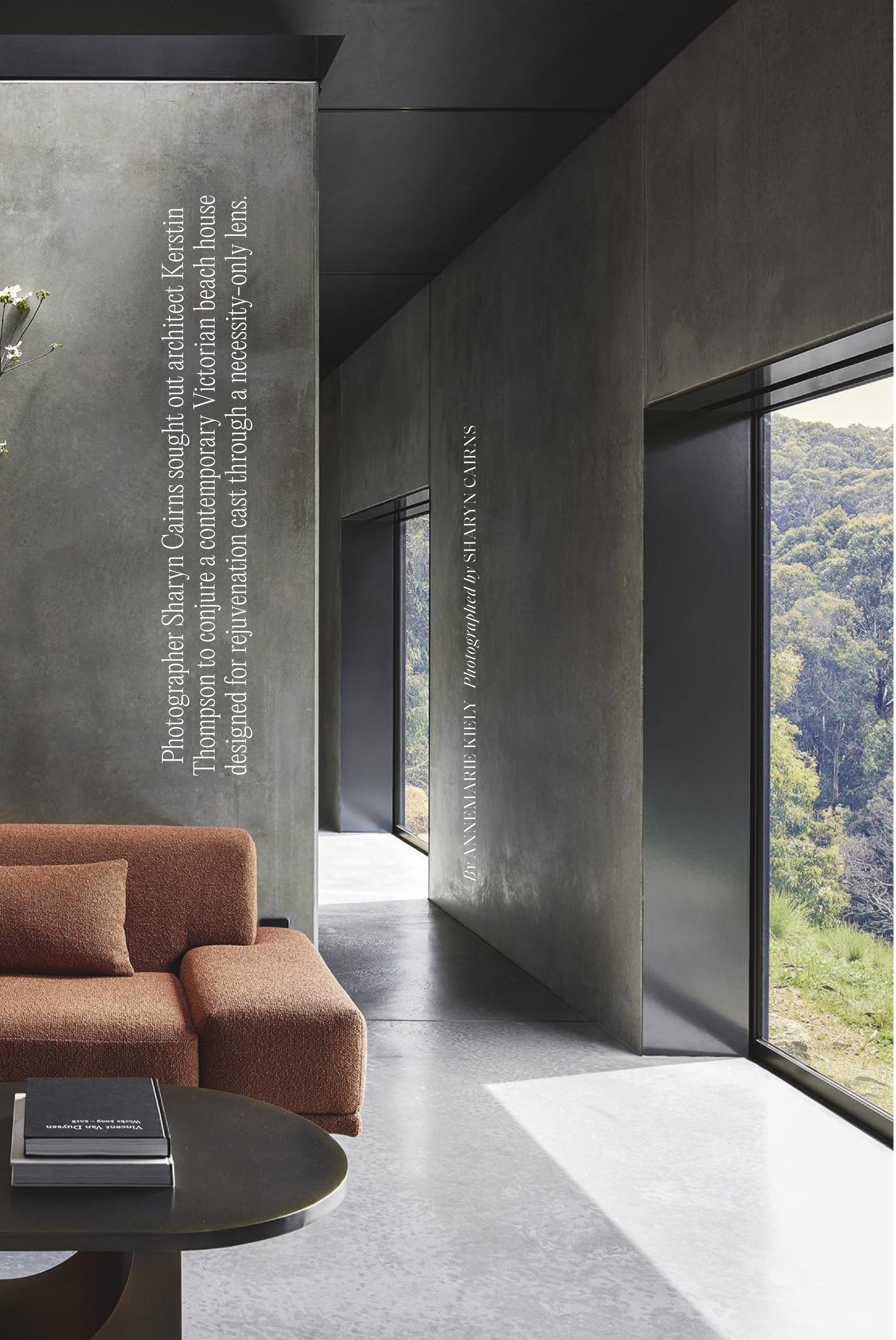


These pages in the living area of this Victorian home, custom Agent 86 **sofa** from Grazia&Co; custom aged brass **coffee table** from Two Lines Studio; black **bottle** by Keiko Narahashi; white **bottle** by Kristin Burgham and **vase** by Kaye Poulton, all from Craft; precast concrete **walls**. *Details, last pages.*


Vincent Van Duysen
Works 2009 – 2018

Photographer Sharyn Cairns sought out architect Kerstin Thompson to conjure a contemporary Victorian beach house designed for rejuvenation cast through a necessity-only lens.

By ANNEMARIE KIELY *Photographed by* SHARYN CAIRNS

This page, from top in the kitchen, Maruni Hiroshima **chairs** from In Good Company; custom aged brass **table** produced by Custom Industrial; porcelain **island bench** and **cabinetry** in blackbutt produced by Spence Construction; Pinch Anders **pendant light** from Spence & Lyda; ceramic **vase** (on left) by Ella Bendrups from Craft; ceramic **bowl** by Michiko Shimada from Tribute; intergrated **appliances** from Fisher & Paykel. In the hallway, **cabinetry** in blackbutt; Butterfly **stool** by Sori Yanagi from Cibi; corten steel **scuplture** by Korban/Flaubert. *Opposite page* on the south side of the home, **outdoor shower** from Brooklyn Copper; **builder** Spence Construction; **landscape design** by Aireys Inlet Groundworks + Kim Neubecker Horticulture.

C

Call it the triumph of hyper-reality over hard facts, but the image now commands the way the world consumes culture and without its impeccable photographic capture, creatives can't hope to grow a clientele beyond their backyard.

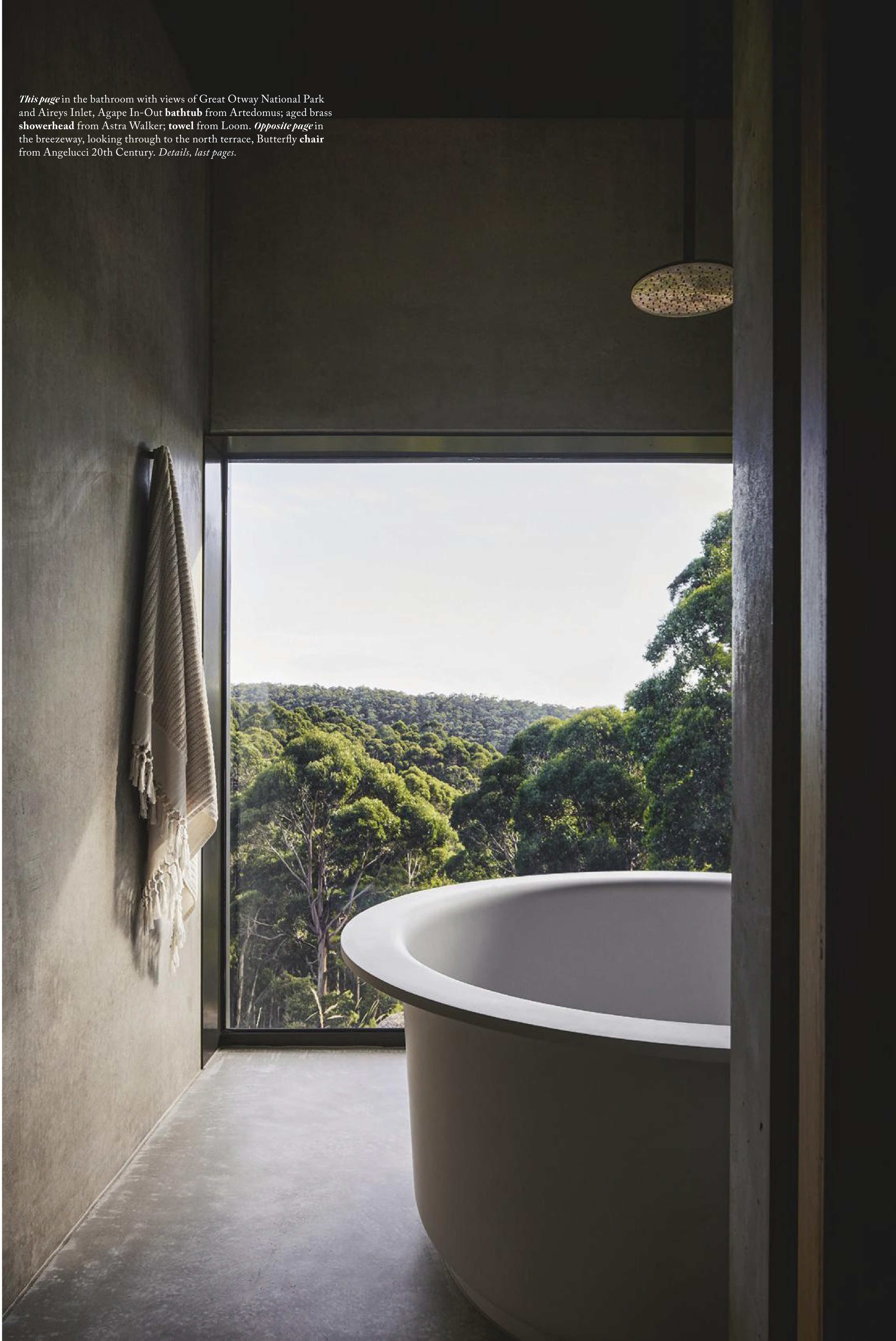
It's a truism that Melbourne-based photographer Sharyn Cairns has turned into a stellar career; one incurring decades of international travel and the train of her eye on the artistry of everyday existence for many of the world's most influential mastheads and makers.

She has done so with such a mastery of composition and chiaroscuro — investing decorative accidents with the modest drama of Dutch still life in the bestselling book *Perfect Imperfect* — that she could claim major pull over the shaping of early 21st-century interior style.

But she wouldn't, because such cocky assertion runs counter to a character that prefers to hide behind the lens rather than posture in front of it, which makes talk of her new beach house, on Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula, a series of squirming deflections back to the building's designer, architect Kerstin Thompson.

"There was no design brief to be honest, only a sense of what I wanted to feel in the space," says Cairns with the share that some years ago she had photographed Thompson's House at Hanging Rock — winner of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects' 2014 Robin Boyd Award — and was taken aback by its quiet beauty and calm. "I remember thinking that if I ever had to build a house this is it. Though my budget was likely to be of no interest." >

This page in the bathroom with views of Great Otway National Park and Aireys Inlet, Agape In-Out **bathtub** from Artedomus; aged brass **showerhead** from Astra Walker; **towel** from Loom. *Opposite page* in the breezeway, looking through to the north terrace, Butterfly **chair** from Angelucci 20th Century. *Details, last pages.*



< But bolstered by a friend's advice to "go for it", Cairns called Kerstin Thompson Architects (KTA) and readied herself should the architect respond to her limited spend and a sloping site animated by native animals and the sway of eucalypts.

"I travel a lot and stay in beautiful boutique hotels that prove contentment can come from the small and intimate — the minimal footprint. I wanted quality over quantity, warmth, mood and feeling… and it had to be about the light," she says of arming for initial discussion with abstracts and emotions. "But a bath was really important… it's my meditation space at the end of the day and I dreamed of looking out over nature under the [simultaneous] rainfall of a shower — it's a sensory thing."

The pair met, connected, and conversed at length about light, with Thompson inquiring as to whether Cairns had read *In Praise of Shadows*, the 1930s treatise on aesthetics by Japanese novelist Jun'ichirō Tanizaki that embeds with such poetic perceptions as: "Were it not for shadows, there would be no beauty."

"That quote was used in *Perfect Imperfect*," says Cairns of the commission clincher. "I knew Kerstin would be clever and thoughtful in the design." And Thompson, designer of the fiercely elegant Bundanon Art Museum and Bridge — the 2022 winner of the Australian Institute of Architects' highest honour, the Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Architecture — knew that Cairns could push frame, detail and colour-scale with the same emotional intensity as her own structural investigations.

"She is a really, really beautiful person," effuses Thompson in later chat about Cairns being simultaneously strong and soft, and eliciting a protectiveness in her that ultimately built into a blunt-ended, 'bugger-off' block of low-slung concrete concealing an inner sequence of softly arcing nooks nuanced for bathing, sleeping, eating and relaxation. These 'wombs' with a view — windows dropped from standard height to exploit the sharp drama of shadow — would be Thompson's architectural concession to both "having Sharyn's back" and the best regard of coastal landscape becoming shifting greyscales of light.

"But it's a challenge to shoot," says Cairns, advising that the architect's structural poetry defies the pull-back of a preferred lens that can sublimate feelings in a photo. Thompson laughs at the irony. "We have done a house for a photographer that eludes the photo, but I keep telling her to stop trying to photograph it and just be in it," which is tantamount to telling Picasso to down his paintbrushes on holiday. Beauty bids the constant witness. **VL** *sharyncairns.com.au kerstinthompson.com*

Objects
TIFFANY & CO.
TIFFANY & CO

Lock *and* Key

An ongoing collaboration between artist Daniel Arsham and Tiffany & Co. is the perfect amalgamation of creativity, heritage and craftsmanship.

By YEONG SASSALL *Photography By* ZANDER TAKETOMO

This page the limited-edition Tiffany x Arsham Studio Lock bangle with more than three carats of diamonds and over one carat of tsavorites. ***Opposite page*** artist Daniel Arsham examining his latest work for Tiffany & Co., the *Bronze Eroded Tiffany Padlock* sculpture.

T

There are few brands in the world who can lay claim to an object as quotidian as a blue box tied with a white ribbon. But for Tiffany & Co. — a house synonymous with sparkling diamonds, Audrey Hepburn in Givenchy and the frenetic glamour of New York City, it's the very foundation upon which the luxury jeweller is built. So potent is the allure of a Tiffany Blue box that the New York-based company has harnessed its powers for its latest creative collaboration with American contemporary artist Daniel Arsham.

Perfectly timed to coincide with the Australian launch of the luxury house's newest collection, Tiffany Lock (the bracelet will be available here in January with the full collection to follow in August), it's the second time Tiffany & Co. has partnered with Arsham. The jeweller commissioned Arsham to create a series of 99 sculptures, titled *Bronze Eroded Tiffany Padlock*, as well as a limited-edition Tiffany & Co. x Arsham Studio Lock bangle, handcrafted in 18-carat white gold with pavé diamonds and tsavorites — brilliant green gemstones launched by Tiffany in 1974. It is both striking and unexpected, much like the connection with Arsham.

If, at first glance, the Miami-raised and New York-based creative seems like an off-kilter choice for the heritage jeweller, think again. Arsham's oeuvre straddles art, architecture and performance, but his focus is on objects, and this is where the synergy between artist and jeweller begins. "My work imagines a contemporary object as if it were viewed from the future — as though we've transported to the future and brought the object back," says Arsham. "And this time dislocation creates a sort of paradox in the object itself. You have this thing that you know from your current era, but it looks old." >

< In honour of the project, Arsham was granted access to the extensive Tiffany archives, where he immersed himself in the vintage silversmithing pieces. As luck or kismet would have it, his fascination with the famed Tiffany padlock was well placed. “Tiffany had been developing the Lock clasp for several years, and the timing worked out. I had been fascinated by these padlocks [at the same time] as they were developing the Lock collection,” he says.

The parallels don’t end there. “With *Bronze Eroded Tiffany Padlock*, we’ve applied a sort of aged patina on the boxes and, ironically, the colour of the patina is very similar to the Tiffany Blue,” says Arsham. “In fact, the patina itself is colloquially referred to as ‘Tiffany Green’.” Indeed, the American jeweller’s 185-year heritage is something Arsham aspires to. “That level of detail and craft is something that I appreciate and strive for in my own work,” he says.

While *Bronze Eroded Tiffany Padlock* is not the first time Arsham Studio has produced work for Tiffany & Co., it’s still symbolic for the artist. “It’s very personal to me, but there’s also an element of history in there — a link between generations of craft, between function and design, between craftsmanship and beauty,” he says. “These are the elements that make Tiffany so unique, and allow it to consistently hone the sweet spot between heritage and modernity. I wanted to create an artwork to celebrate that.” VL *tiffany.com.au*
The Tiffany Lock collection launches in Australia in January.

> “There’s an element of history in there – a link between generations of craft, between function and design, between craftsmanship and beauty”

This page, from top the *Bronze Eroded Tiffany Padlock* comes encased in a custom-made art crate. Arsham holds the limited-edition Lock bangle alongside the sculpture, which received over 400 hours of hand-finishing.

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PHOTOGRAPHER: LEVON BAIRD
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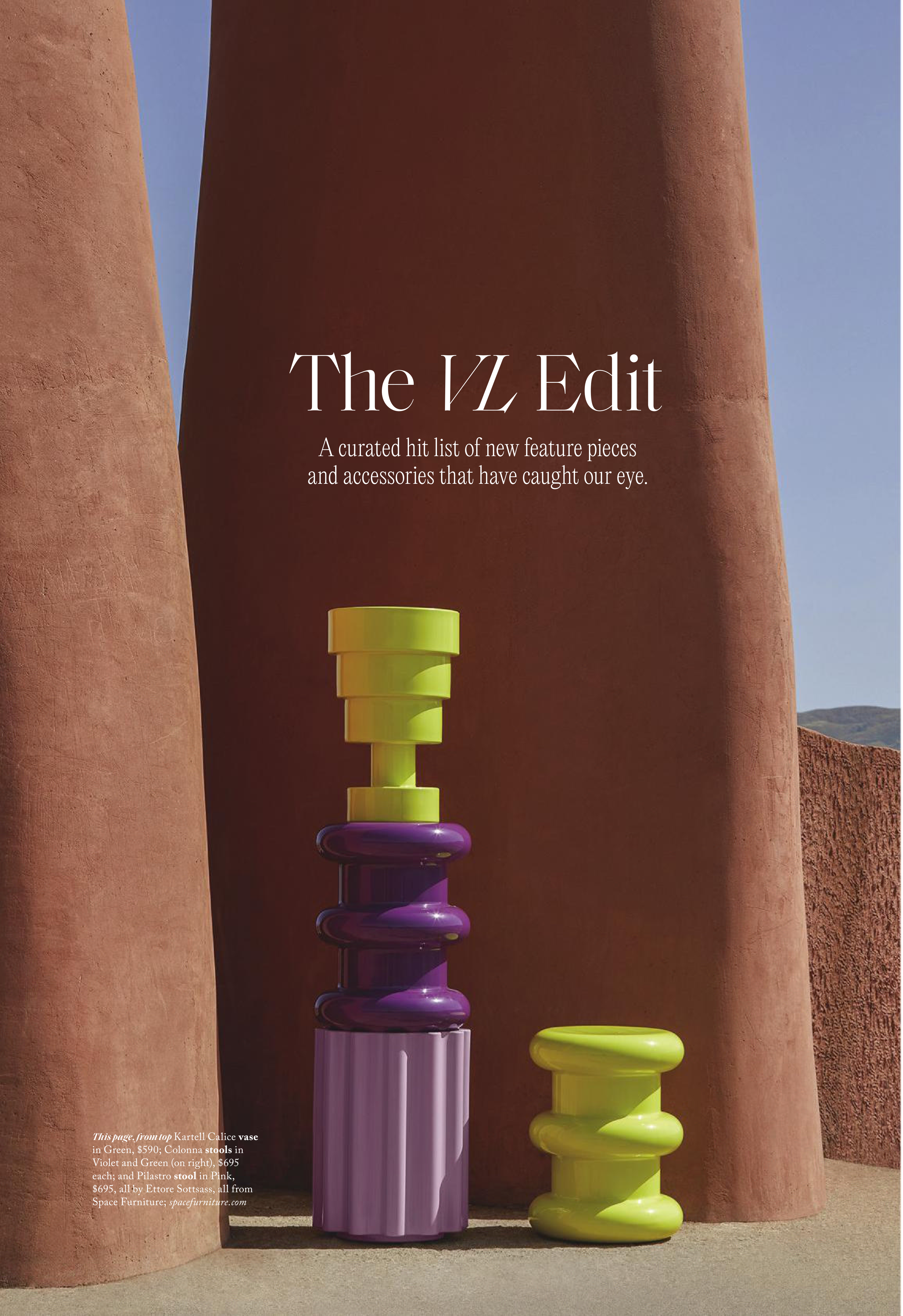
The *VL* Edit

A curated hit list of new feature pieces and accessories that have caught our eye.



This page, from top Kartell Calice **vase** in Green, $590; Colonna **stools** in Violet and Green (on right), $695 each; and Pilastro **stool** in Pink, $695, all by Ettore Sottsass, all from Space Furniture; *spacefurniture.com*

COMPILED BY SANDY DAO. PHOTOGRAPHER: IMAGE COURTESY OF KARTELL

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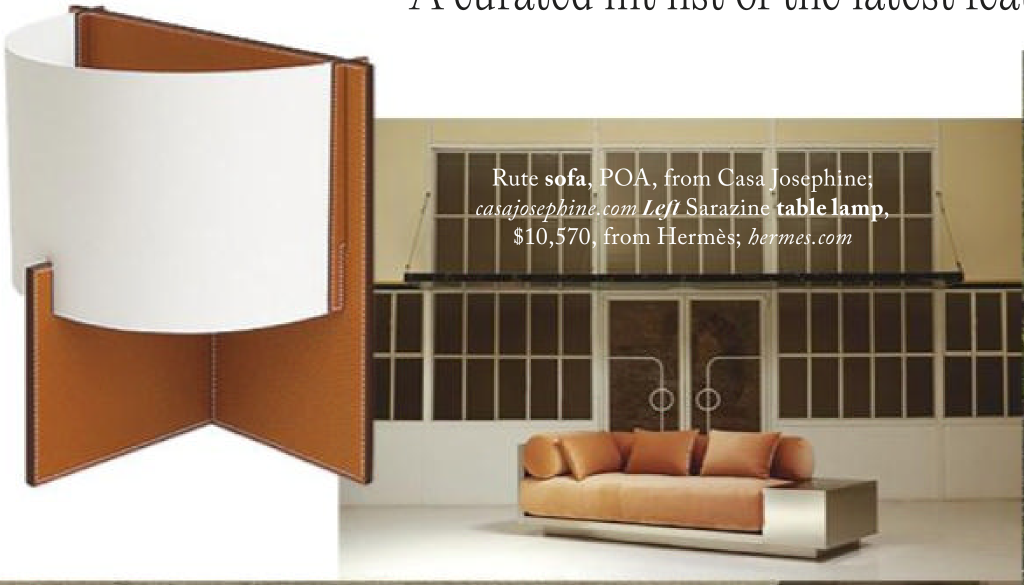
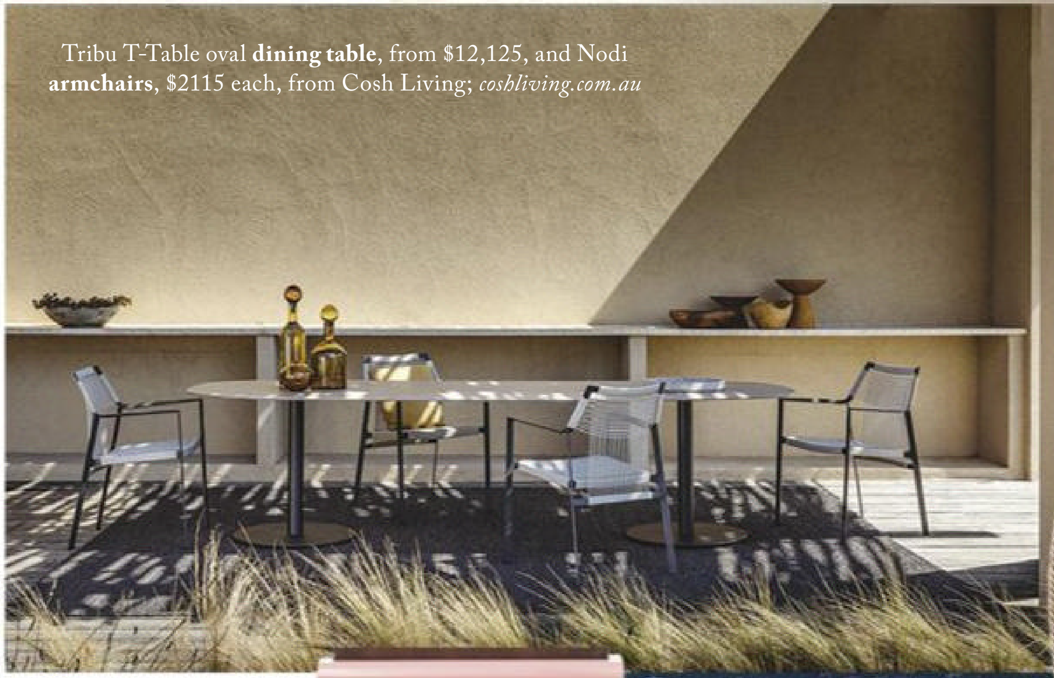
The *VL* Edit

A curated hit list of the latest feature pieces.



Rute **sofa**, POA, from Casa Josephine; *casajosephine.com* ***Left*** Sarazine **table lamp**, $10,570, from Hermès; *hermes.com*

Obscura Deviation wool **rug** by Colin King, $1011/92cm x 153cm, from Beni; *benirugs.com/en-au*

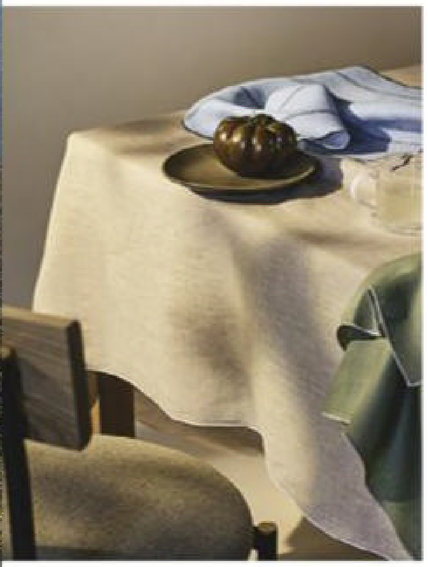


Tribu T-Table oval **dining table**, from $12,125, and Nodi **armchairs**, $2115 each, from Cosh Living; *coshliving.com.au*

Vivi **side table** and **coffee table**, POA, from Cotswold InOut Furniture; *cotswoldfurniture.com.au*

Clockwise from below left Acerbis Storet **chest of drawers**, from $11,860, from Space Furniture; *spacefurniture.com* Cuenco Luna **bowl**, $54, and Kaluuya **pot**, from $129, from Domayne; *domayne.com.au*

Baxter Lago Narciso outdoor **sofa** by Studiopepe, from $31,050; Tia **chairs** by Antonino Sciortino, from $3450 each, and Keramikè **tables**, from $3450 each, all from Space Furniture; *spacefurniture.com*



Abbotson Belgian flax linen **tablecloth** in Flax, $300; Abbotson Stripe Belgian flax linen **napkin** in Spa, $80 for a set of 4; and Abbotson Belgian flax linen **napkin** in Cactus, $80 for a set of 4, all from Sheridan; *sheridan.com.au*

COMPILED BY SANDY DAO. PHOTOGRAPHER: JOAQUIN CALLE (CASA JOSEPHINE), GIANLUCA VASSALLO AND FRANCESCO MANNIRONI (BAXTER)

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Calin Swivel Armchair upholstered in Warwick Ovis fabric, D145x75H, made in Australia, from $2,899 (includes three matching scatter cushions); Della Lamp Table, $499. **On armchair:** Pascale Indoor Cushions in Rose and Mineral, $59 each. **On lamp table:** Jarron Dune Forest Round Vase, $19.

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Warwick Kindred fabric comes in 14 shades, including neutrals, such as Snow (pictured right) and modern hues, such as Cascade (below).

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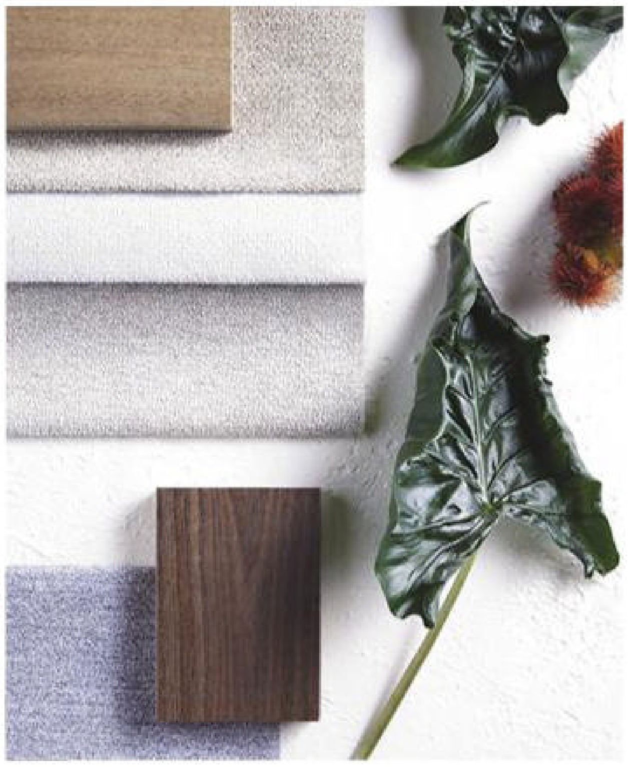

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CHOOSE YOUR FABRIC

Go for practical and pretty with the woven-look Kindred fabric pictured, or browse the Warwick range for options.

↑

CHOOSE YOUR TIMBER STAIN

Solid hardwood legs can be stained a variety of shades to complement your preferred upholstery fabric and the flooring in your living area.

Cleo 3.5-seater Lounge upholstered in Warwick Kindred fabric, 242x104x79H, made in Australia, from $2,299; Eclipse Ebony Coffee Table, 130x70x42H, made in Australia, $2,399; Capri Beige Rug, 200x290cm, $679. **On bookcase**: White Sea Coral, $129; Herrietta Dark Peach Bowl, Medium, $99; Wave Midnight Blue Vase, $79; Fleur Fish Bowl, Small, $24. **On couch**: Swan Rectangular Cushion in Emerald, $59; Bondi Fresh Indoor Cushion in Malmsbury Sapphire, 43x43cm, $189; Bondi Fresh Indoor Cushion in Calverton Evergreen, 63x63cm, $159. **On coffee table**: Georgia Dark Peach Bowl, Medium, $24; Robert Gordon Poets Dream Fruit Bowl, $89.

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Go for a classic Black or White timber finish, or create a modern look with Fusion (pictured left and below), Soft Grey or Eucalyptus.

CHOOSE YOUR FABRIC

Personalise your bedhead with fabric inserts to complement the timber stain (pictured far left in Warwick Lexus fabric in Feather).

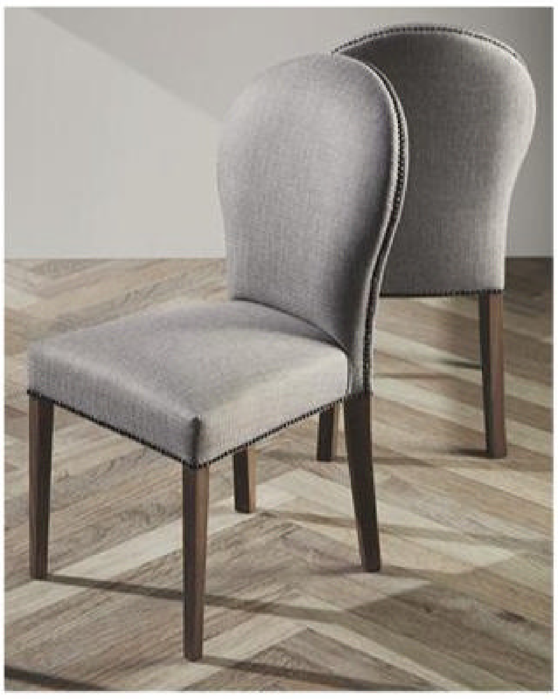
CHOOSE YOUR BEDSIDE TABLE TOP

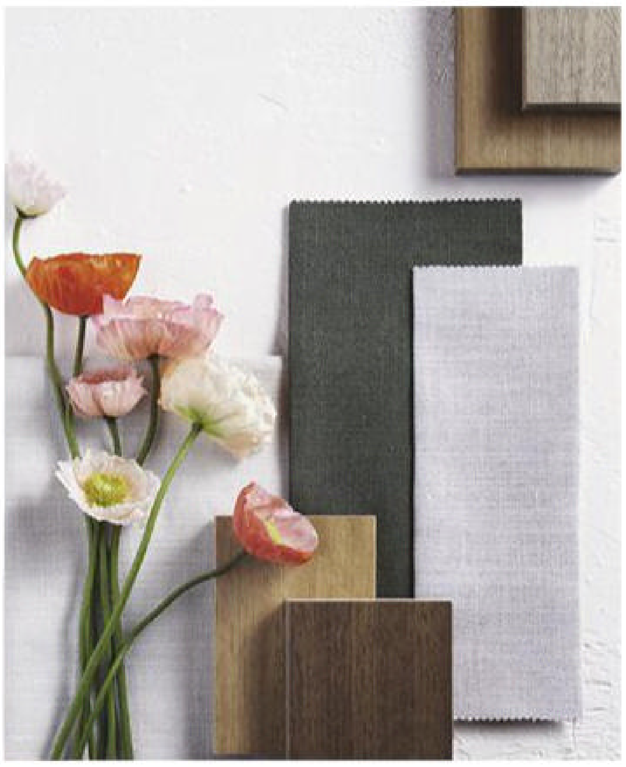
Pick from five colours for the leather drawer handles and pair with timber or stone bedside table tops in Acqua Mare (pictured) or Smokey Grey.

Calverton Queen Bed, made in Australia, from $3,499, and XXL Bedside Tables, made in Australia, $1,959 each; Miller Arch Wall Art, 140x100cm, $389. **On bedside tables**: Sophia Table Lamp, $229; Georgia Dark Peach Bowl, Medium, $24; Tallie Blue Tray, set of two (one shown), $89; Stripe Black Jar, Small, $129; Wave Midnight Blue Vase, $79. **On bed**: Amelia Quilt Cover Set, Queen, $219; Tempur Tencel White Sheet Set, Queen (sheets only pictured), $369; Domayne Luxuries 500TC Clay Sheet Set, Queen (pillowcase only pictured), $167; Swan Rectangular Cushions in Olive, $59 each; Pascale Indoor Cushion in Rose, $59; Basic Rectangular Linen Cushion in Sage, $39; Bondi Zanzibar Indoor Cushion in Essence Orchid, 53x53cm, $129.

CHOOSE YOUR DETAILS

Eclipse fabric dining chairs come in an array of colours and with or without studs, and the legs can be stained to match your dining table.





CHOOSE YOUR TIMBER STAIN

Crafted from Victorian Ash timber, the Flinders dining table can be finished in your choice of seven stains.

CHOOSE YOUR SHAPE AND SIZE

The Flinders dining table comes in a range of rectangular sizes as well as round and square options to suit the needs of your household.

Flinders Rectangular Dining Table in Light Grey, 240x110x77H, made in Australia, from $3,799; Eclipse fabric dining chairs with studs, upholstered in Zepel Scorpio fabric, made in Australia, $699 each; Ryker Grey Planter, Large, $279; **On table**: Robert Gordon Poets aDream 1.2L Water Jug, $59; Sally Blue Vase, Small, $79; Robert Gordon Poets Dream Fruit Bowl, $89.

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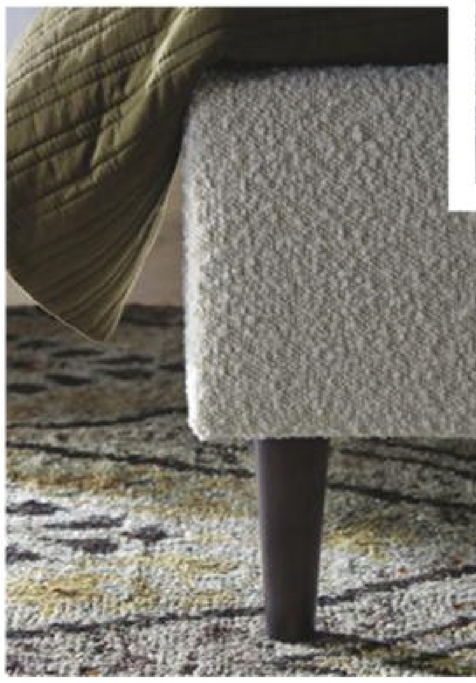
CHOOSE YOUR BEDHEAD SIZE

Change the height of your bedhead to suit your space – keep it short and sweet for a more minimal look and taller to make a statement.

CHOOSE YOUR FABRIC & COLOUR

Upholster your bed in your choice of Warwick fabrics, such as the timeless Ovis Boucle in Ivory (pictured left).



CHOOSE YOUR TIMBER STAIN

Timber legs can be finished in Black, Chocolate, Charcoal, Clear or Aged Wheat – or provide a sample to be colour matched.

Round Zilver Queen Bed, made in Australia, $1,999; Louis Bedside Tables in Natural, made in Australia, $849 each; Sari Silk Beige Pattern Rug, 200x290cm, $1,499; Lucia Round Boucle Stool in Olive, $199. **On bedside tables**: Arch Vase, Large, $59; Mima Peach Vase, $59; Berry 60cm Pink Spray, $15 each; Monterey Table Lamp, $259; Wave Low Khaki Vase, $79; Wave Blush Vase, $59. **On bed**: Domayne Luxuries Olivia Quilt Cover Set in Olive, Queen, $239; Boucle/Velvet Oversize Reverse Cushion in Clay, $89; Boucle/Velvet Reverse Rectangle Cushion in Olive, $89; Aura Herringbone Cushion in Khaki, $69; Boucle Round Ball in Clay, $69.

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CHOOSE YOUR COLOUR

Zepel Cottage fabric is available in a wide range of shades including the elegant Stellar (pictured right) and Snow (pictured below).

↓

↑

CHOOSE YOUR STYLE

Splurge on a patterned fabric to make a statement, go for classic understated colour-blocking – or mix and match.

↑

CHOOSE YOUR LEG HEIGHT

A high leg can help give the illusion of space in smaller living areas, while a low leg is perfect for creating a more traditional profile.

Ramba 3-piece Modular Lounge upholstered in Zepel Cottage fabric, 358x100-280x75H, made in Australia, from $7,999; Romano Buffet, 150x45x80H, $1,999; Romano Coffee Table, 140x70x40H, $1,499; Harper Lines Wall Art, $299; Josefine Pendant, $249. **On buffet**: Ava Gold Vase, Large, $129; Salt & Pepper Halcyon Gold Vase, Medium, $49. **On coffee table**: Jarron Aran Smoke Vase, $79; Tallie Blue Tray, set of two (one shown), $89.

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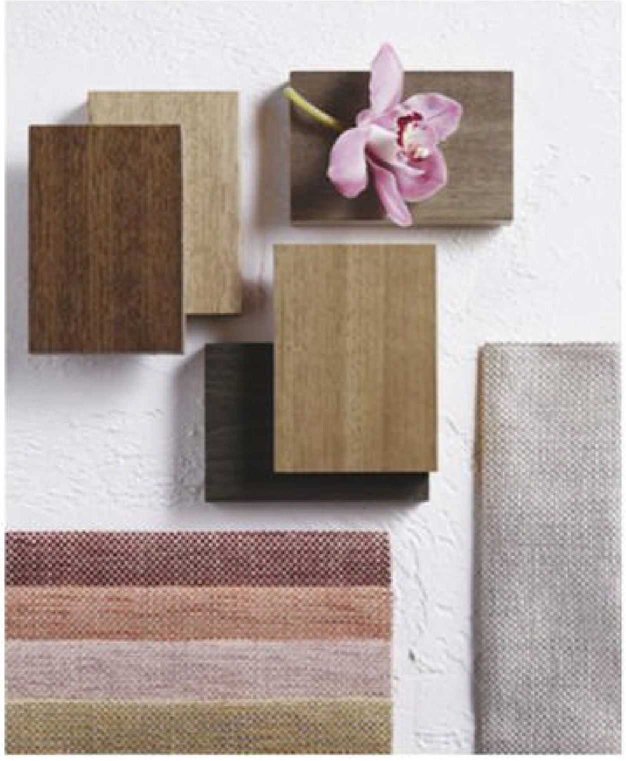
CHOOSE YOUR SHAPE AND SIZE

Available in a range of rectangular sizes as well as round and square options, the Tallows dining table can be customised to fit your space.

↓



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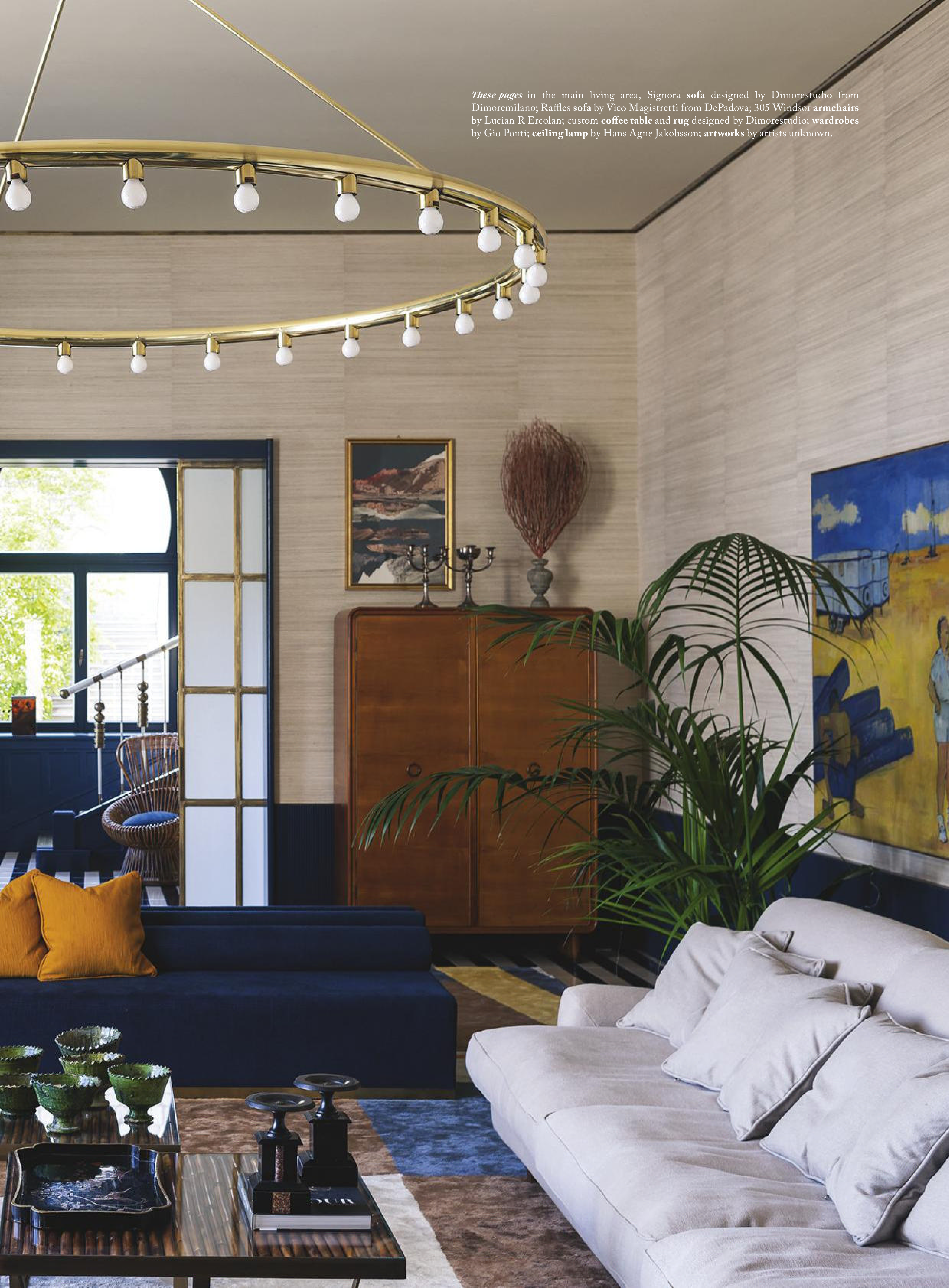
By ANNEMARIE KIELY *Photographed by* ANDREA FERRARI

Vivid Dream

A villa dramatically set on the Croatian coastline with an indelible tale of its own has its next chapter written by present-day purveyors of layered heritage narrative Dimorestudio.

This page the view from one of the bedrooms on the second floor of Villa Sheherezade in Dubrovnik. It overlooks the island of Lokrum in the Adriatic Sea. *Opposite page* in the dining room, with a lounge area overlooking the garden, custom **lounge** designed by Dimorestudio. *Details, last pages.*



These pages in the main living area, Signora **sofa** designed by Dimorestudio from Dimoremilano; Raffles **sofa** by Vico Magistretti from DePadova; 305 Windsor **armchairs** by Lucian R Ercolan; custom **coffee table** and **rug** designed by Dimorestudio; **wardrobes** by Gio Ponti; **ceiling lamp** by Hans Agne Jakobsson; **artworks** by artists unknown.

F

For Britt Moran and Emiliano Salci of Dimorestudio, the Milan-based design practice that does a deliciously revisionist line in layered histories, Villa Sheherezade siren-called with an epic love story and an eccentric architecture on Croatia's glittering Dalmatian Coast. As it had done for decades to a succession of state leaders and Hollywood stars including a loved-up Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton (husband number five and six), who made the landmark 1920s villa their bolthole while filming on location in Dubrovnik in the 1960s.

"It is an amazing story," effuses Moran, who beams in from mission control near Milan's central train station on a busy Monday morning to discuss Dimorestudio's redress of a destination property owned by a Chilean family with wine-producing business in the Balkans. "Some work was needed on the interiors, but the garden was really, really incredible; an ancient horticulture with amazing trees and terraces dropping all the way down to the sea." Salci, a contra-post of fashion bombast and Milano musicality to Moran's cool minimalism and North Carolina twang, remembers both he and Moran being served the design brief for a boutique hotel, which soon rescaled into a holiday rental when the pandemic decelerated travel to more purposeful journeying. Suddenly the tourist panacea was a private sanctuary with a story.

> "It's a seaside resort, so a comfortable, understated elegance was more suited than opulence"

And the villa pulsed with one, says Moran of the Islamic geometries swirling around the tragic tale of Sheherezade — the first owner's lover whose literary namesake preserved life and engendered love with endless storytelling in the Middle Eastern epic *The Thousand and One Nights*. "So, you have this Austro-Hungarian arms dealer madly in love with this Jewish woman called Sheherezade who he builds this incredible villa for," says Moran, questioning why he can't find such a besotted benefactor, minus the gun-running. "But when war starts, she is deported to a concentration camp. Her lover follows and the villa falls into the hands of the state."

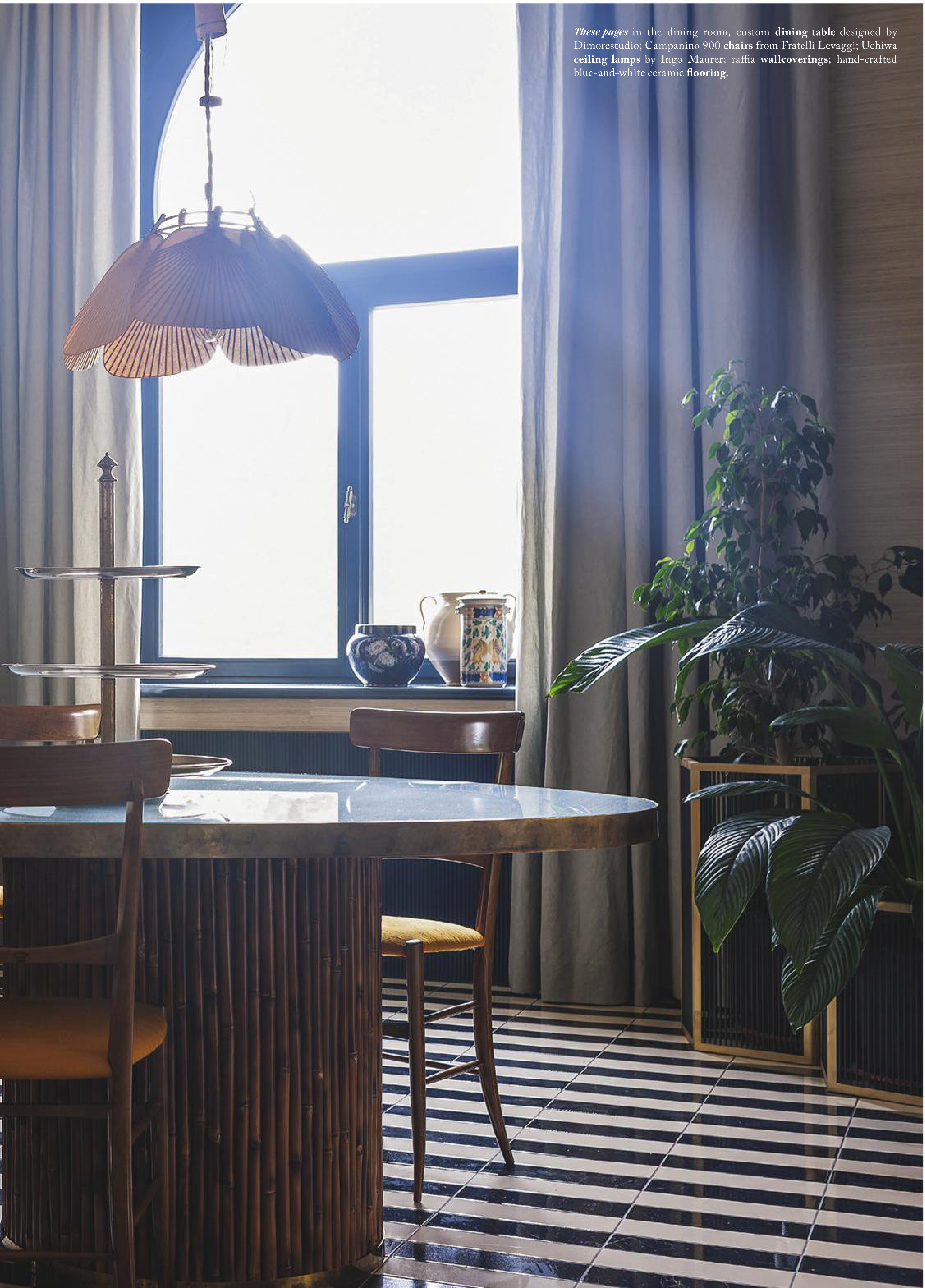
The legend builds like a Babushka of love narratives in a white-stoned architecture that best describes as an *Arabian Nights* fantasy fizzing with the Jazz-age ambivalence of an F Scott Fitzgerald novel on the edge of a time-warped medieval town recently cast as King's Landing in the HBO series *Game of Thrones*.

"I think I'm the only person in the world that hasn't watched that series," says Moran with a bemused laugh and the add that books, rather than the digital box office, have been the studio's conduit to immersive concepts for the luxury likes of Hermès, Fendi, Bottega Veneta and assorted high-end hospitality clients, counting the upscale locomotive the Orient Express. It was decommissioned from duty over a decade ago but, by dint of tourism's new want for a slower pace, was put into the conceptual hands of Dimorestudio, who dreamed up a sexy *La Dolce Vita* extravagance as film auteur Wes Anderson might have captured it. Think 'slowmads' indulging in truffle-cooking sessions as they slow-train it to the food's source in a viscerally rich symmetry along reinstated lines to 14 different regions across Italy, plus Istanbul and Paris.

"This summer I went on a very, very normal trip with an organised tour group to archaeological sites in Greece and Turkey," says Moran with note that such normalcy was so enthralling it led to learning Ancient Greek — "not easy when the lessons are in Italian". It also instigated the read of *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* — the bestseller by Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari that posits human society has been largely steered by its capacity to believe in stories, which Moran summarily resumes telling.

"The years pass and a South American businessman admires the villa from afar, committing to the purchase of the neighbouring hotel just to be near it. But there is a small door separating the two properties, so the hotel-owning gentleman asks the villa's caretaker if he can visit its space. The caretaker says absolutely, it's yours… seems the hotel came with the villa. That gentleman was the grandfather of our commissioning client." >

This page the pool in the gardens underneath the property. The wall is an original part of the property.



These pages in the dining room, custom **dining table** designed by Dimorestudio; Campanino 900 **chairs** from Fratelli Levaggi; Uchiwa **ceiling lamps** by Ingo Maurer; raffia **wallcoverings**; hand-crafted blue-and-white ceramic **flooring**.

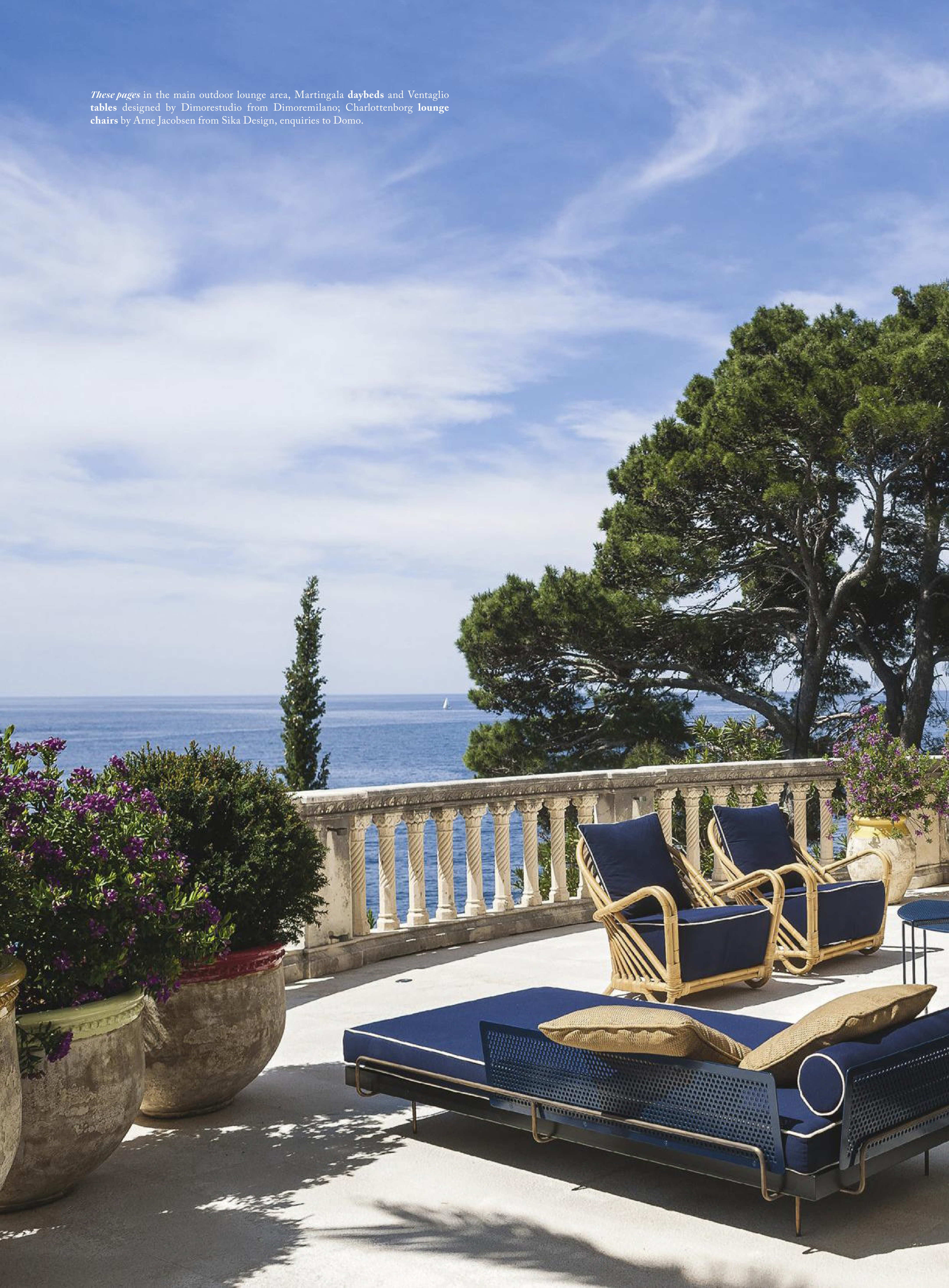
< It's a long lead into a scheme that has spun old narratives in a new way, nuancing Islamic patterns and Mediterranean colours — blue, white, tan and sun-bleached sand — with unexpected adjacencies of texture, time and shape across a souvenir cache of retro lighting and fringed sofas that suggest Taylor and Burton might still be in residence.

"It's a seaside resort, so a comfortable, understated elegance was more suited than opulence," says Moran of the requisite serviceability. "We wanted it to exude the air of a worldly itinerant; a seafaring colonial who carried exotic treasures home from amazing voyages.

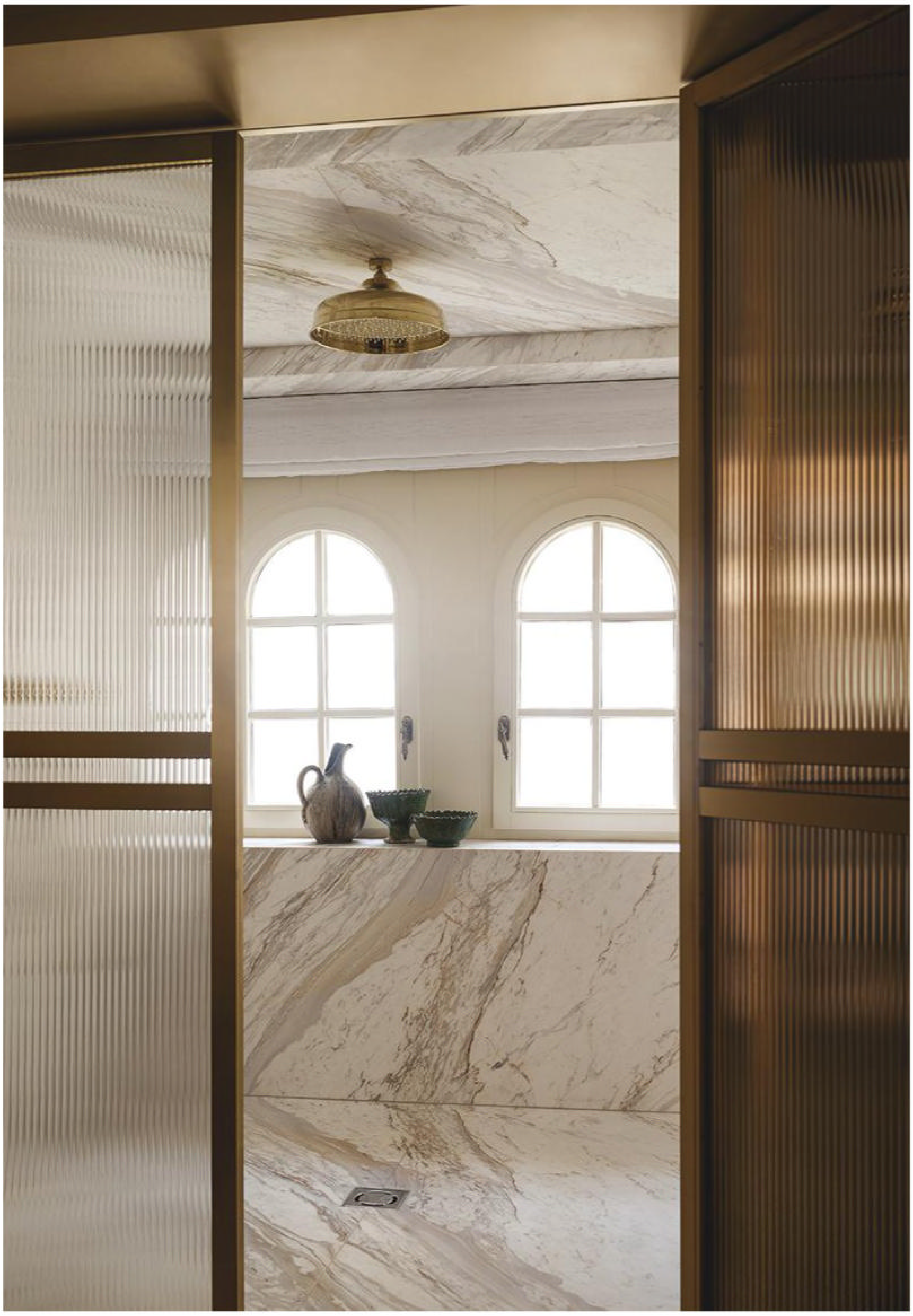
"But we can only lay down the base," he adds of the contrived imperfections and client clutter that ultimately "dirty it up" into an interesting archaeology of material remains.

To the question of a signature style, Moran and Salci baulk at the determination of a single tag but tell of a concerted play with the unexpected and a synthesis of disparate styles that settle a cinematic atmosphere over their spaces. "Consistency is the playground of dull minds," I remind of the small line in *Sapiens* that supports their design view. Moran accordingly praises the inherent power of storytelling and the strange places in which unexpected beauty so often bubbles up. For Dimorestudio, life and theatre are just a ticket apart. VL *dimorestudio.eu*

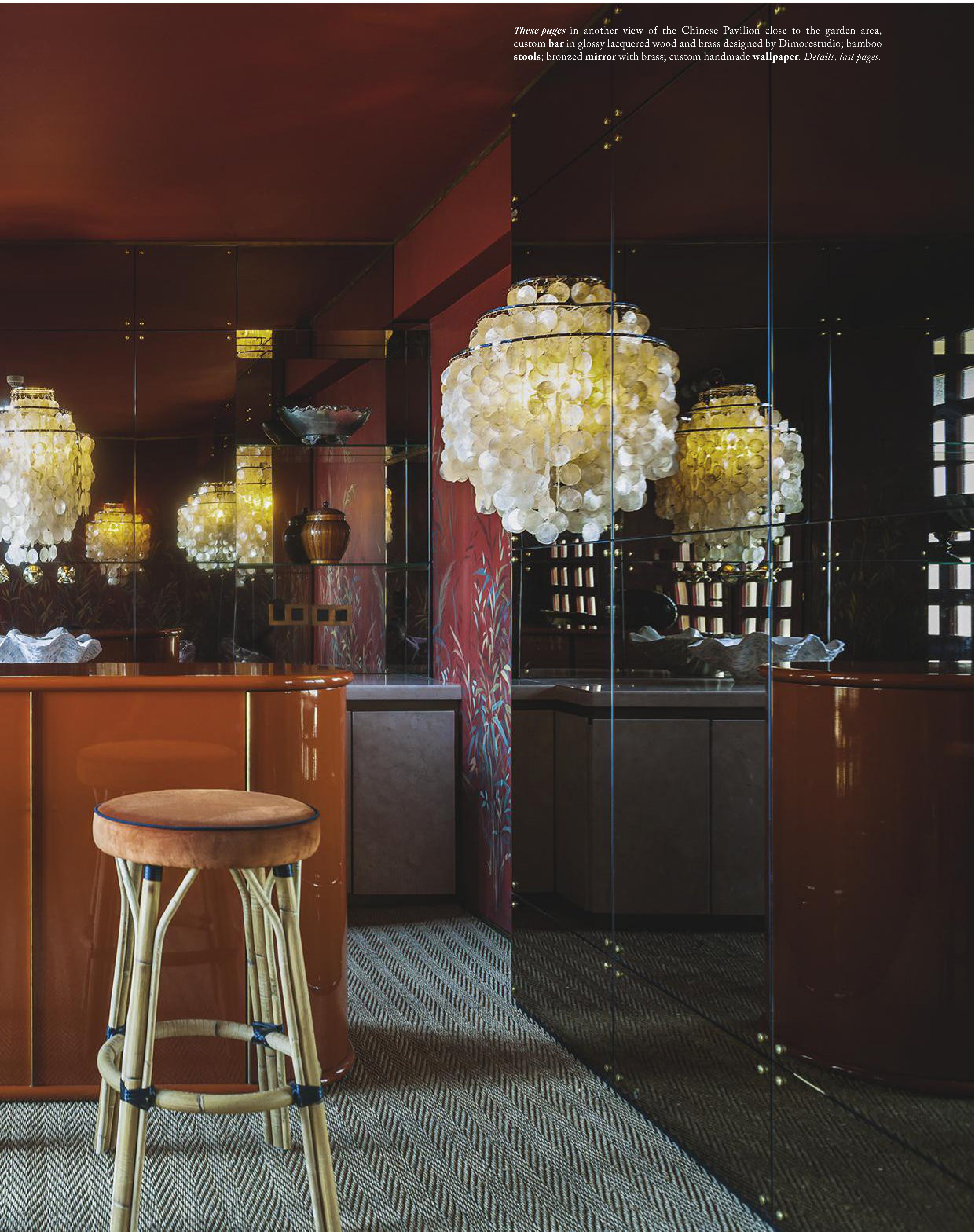
This page on the top-floor terrace next to the villa's original signature dome with views over the Adriatic Sea. ***Opposite page, from top*** in the Chinese pavilion, Sciura **armchair** designed by Dimorestudio from Dimoremilano; FUN 1WM **pendant lamps** by Verner Panton. In the main bedroom, custom half-height **cabinets** in walnut wood with Vienna straw details designed by Dimorestudio; powder-blue silk **wallcoverings**.



These pages in the main outdoor lounge area, Martingala **daybeds** and Ventaglio **tables** designed by Dimorestudio from Dimoremilano; Charlottenborg **lounge chairs** by Arne Jacobsen from Sika Design, enquiries to Domo.

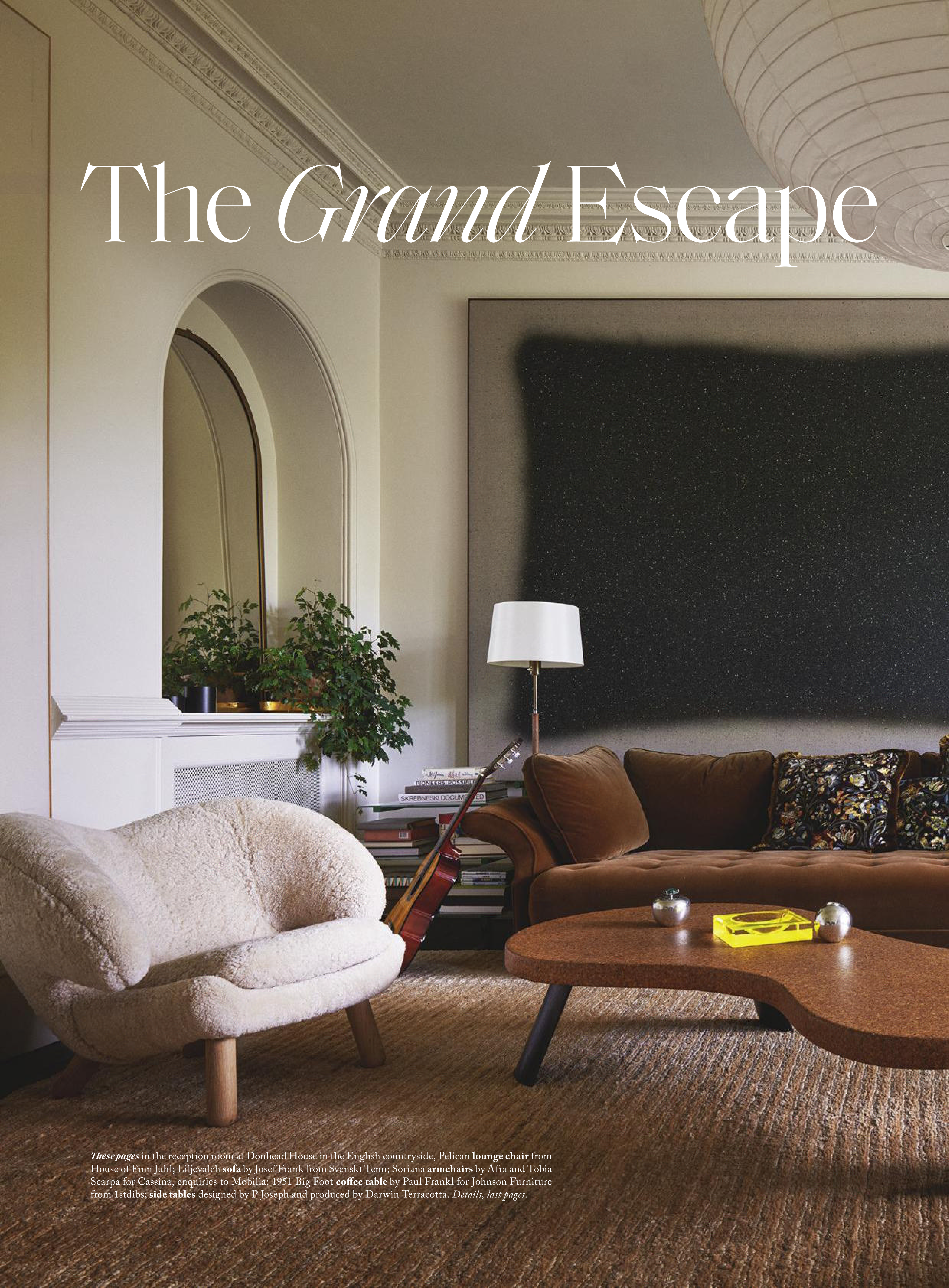


This page in the main ensuite, **walk-in shower** in Calacatta Gold marble with brass doors with embossed glass. ***Opposite page*** the entrance to Villa Sheherezade featuring tiling original to the property.



These pages in another view of the Chinese Pavilion close to the garden area, custom **bar** in glossy lacquered wood and brass designed by Dimorestudio; bamboo **stools**; bronzed **mirror** with brass; custom handmade **wallpaper**. *Details, last pages.*

The *Grand* Escape



These pages in the reception room at Donhead House in the English countryside, Pelican **lounge chair** from House of Finn Juhl; Liljevalch **sofa** by Josef Frank from Svenskt Tenn; Soriana **armchairs** by Afra and Tobia Scarpa for Cassina, enquiries to Mobilia; 1951 Big Foot **coffee table** by Paul Frankl for Johnson Furniture from 1stdibs; **side tables** designed by P Joseph and produced by Darwin Terracotta. *Details, last pages.*

Welcome to Donhead House, Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson's painstakingly revived holiday retreat in the English countryside.

By VIRGINIA JEN *Photographed by* MAGNUS MÅRDING

This page homeowners Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson on the grounds of Donhead House, **landscape design** by Miranda Brooks. *Opposite page* in a view of the chef's kitchen complete with a pizza oven, Bonnet Maestro **cooker** from Hobart UK; custom stainless steel and glass **fridges** from Weald Refrigeration; **cabinet** and Lovö **dining table** by Axel Einar Hjorth; pine carver **chairs** by Rainer Daumiller; **wall** in white glazed bricks from Wienerberger; **floor** in Blue Lias stone from Artorius Faber; handmade earthernware **pendant lamps** with iron chain and pull by Natalie Page from BDDW.

A

Asked to imagine a country retreat brings to mind serene scenes of pastoral natural beauty — tidy lawns and sculpted hedges with a smattering of wildflowers shining brightly in sunlight, while untamed trees stoically stand as they have done for centuries. And a vision of a stately manor that has perhaps stood for nearly just as long, yet is sumptuously fitted out in quality furnishings, fittings and fixtures. Such a place typifying inviting retreat instantly sets the mind at ease. The reality of restoring such a grand architectural gesture though is nowhere near as idyllic, and while the potential can be seen immediately, the hard graft is something one has to look squarely in the eye and commit to.

This was the prospect that Dame Natalie Massenet and Erik Torstensson met head on when the couple purchased Donhead House in 2014. It also presented a serendipitous opportunity for the pair, who were seeking a place of solace and reprieve from their incredibly busy lives, to spend time with Massenet's daughters Isabella and Ava and the couple's son, Jet.

Massenet is best known as the founder of the game-changing luxury fashion platform Net-A-Porter and is continuing her trailblazing path as a co-founder and partner of Imaginary Ventures, a venture capital firm unlocking support for consumer-first fashion tech businesses. Torstensson brings formidable fashion business nous of his own, having launched covetable denim brand Frame with friend Jens Grede in 2012 and worked with the likes of Louis Vuitton, Moncler, Calvin Klein, Zara and H&M via their creative agency collective Saturday Group.

> "It is a pretty humbling thing to take on a property that, if treated correctly, will outlive us all"

It was through the couple's fashion friendships that they would find the project's interior designer Philip Joseph. "Erik and I met Philip at a dinner party with his husband Erdem — a great friend of ours — at Anya Hindmarch's house," recalls Massenet. "Our conversation drifted to our mutual love of architecture and design, and we discovered that Philip had been part of the team that transformed Ett Hem, our favourite hotel in Stockholm designed by Studioilse, Ilse Crawford's studio where he worked for several years. He had also just created a beautiful space for Erdem's first store in London and we said, 'If we find a house, we would love you to do it.'"

For the trio, Donhead House would prove to be that house of possibilities. "As it turned out, Erik and I and Erdem and Philip all drove to Wiltshire one sunny day in the spring of 2014 and we fell in love with the potential of Donhead — it was such a beautiful day that the gardens and landscape really sold the house," says Massenet. "We completely overlooked that it was, apart from a few rooms that the previous owners lived in most of the time, very run-down!"

The brief centred on seamlessly transposing the way Massenet and Torstensson live and casting it into the estate. "They are hugely generous hosts and really know how to have a great time with family and friends," says Joseph of his friends. "They are just brilliant at every detail whether a family lunch, a weekend away or even a big party. So I suppose while we were making a family home, it should also provide a stage for these great, life-affirming moments."

In addition to the issue of Donhead House's existing contrasting aesthetics, the dwelling's entire foundation had to be tanked to keep it dry, a necessary precaution given its location in a flood zone. And then there was the labyrinth-like layout to sort out. "The original floor plan of the house was disjointed after generations of additions — lots of staircases and dark halls," says Massenet. "The team — Philip Joseph and architect David Archer — spent months unlocking the flow of the house, relocating a centre staircase to connect all the floors for the first time, and opening up an enfilade to allow a generous flow between the rooms."

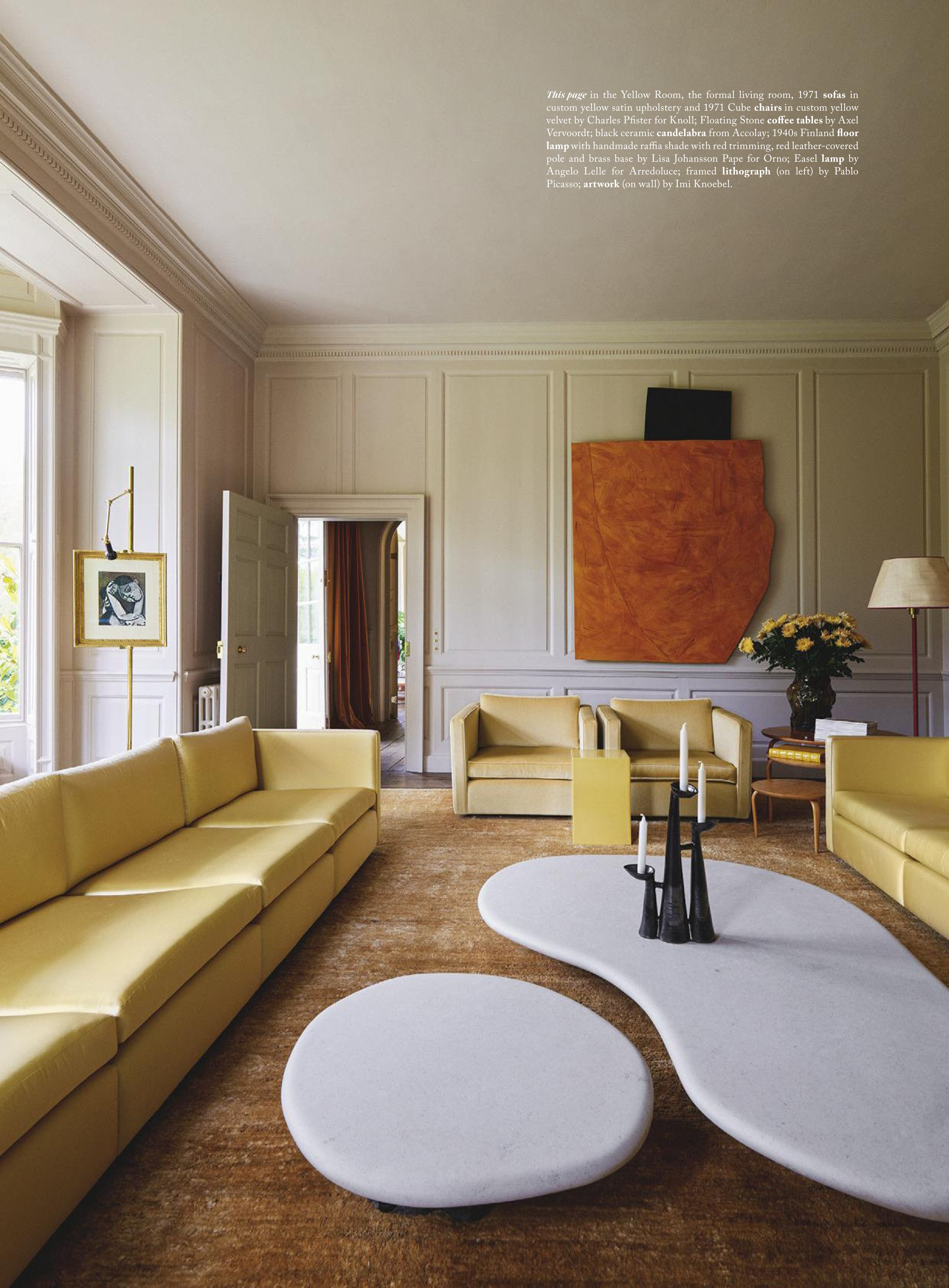
For all the complexity of tackling the architecture and interiors, the guiding principle behind the approach can be easily surmised: "To have a deep understanding of materiality in all its forms and how the combination of materials with light in the space makes people feel," says Joseph. "A big house like this needs to work from when it's full to the brim with people to when one is there on their own — it has to work at different scales and still feel just as comfortable and warm."

A meaningful tie to the surrounding natural landscape was also integral to this feeling of embracing comfort. "What was always very special about this house was its position in the landscape and Miranda Brooks did an extraordinary job capitalising on that and making the house make sense again in its relationship to nature," adds Joseph.

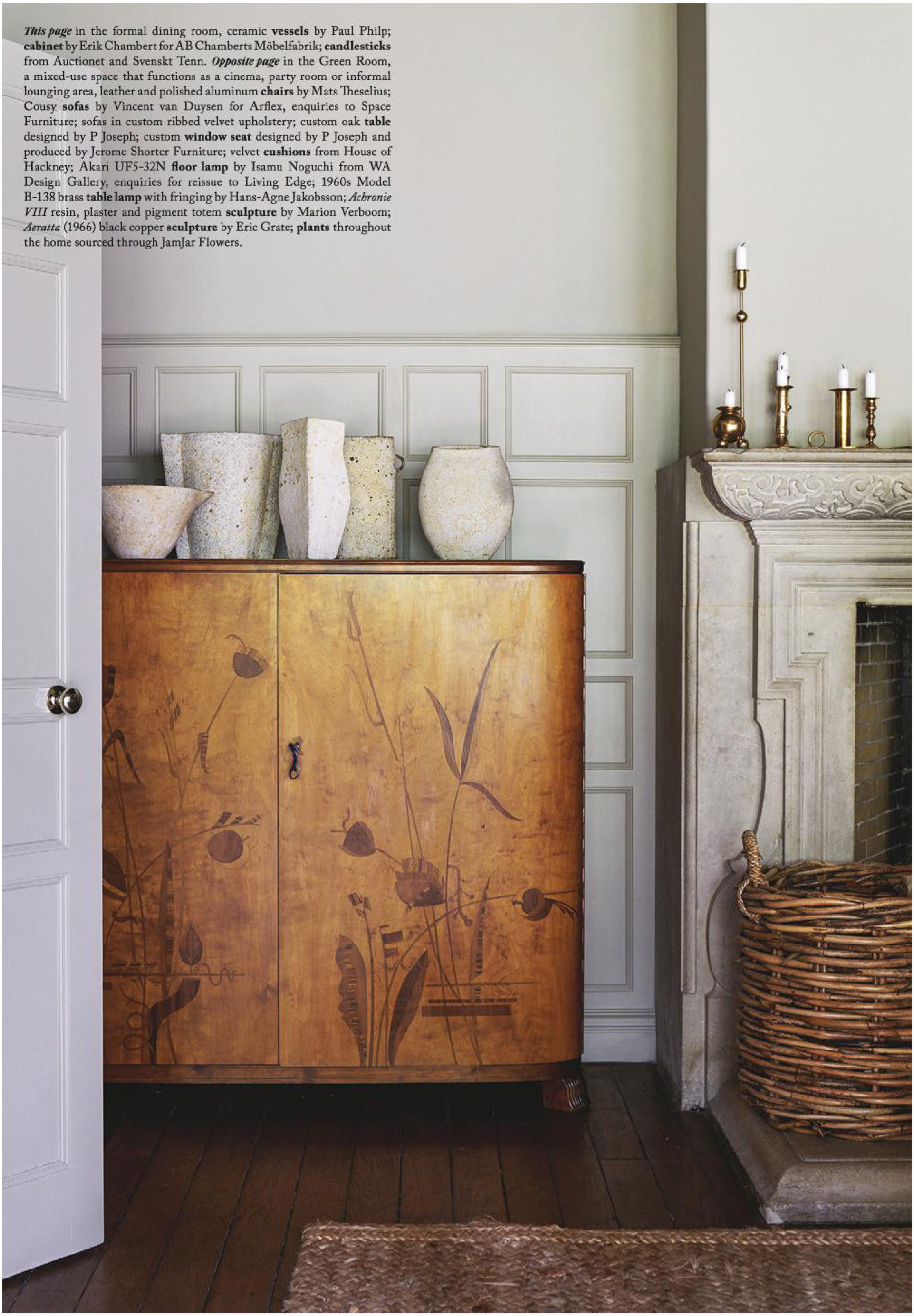
Donhead House's Grade II listed status determined the parameters but also offered the team a rare chance, over the course of seven years, of salvaging and preserving unique history for the future. "We genuinely believe that without our intervention the house would have eventually been lost," says Massenet. "It is a pretty humbling thing to take on a property that, if treated correctly, will outlive us all."

"We always want to restore as much as possible of what we find in a studied, careful way and then for the new to be clearly read as contemporary against the historic frame," says Joseph of working with historic buildings and adding a tactful chapter to the Donhead tale. "The result is hopefully true to the building and its history, and yet it has a feeling of modernity."

"We imagined Donhead as a place for us to host our friends and family away from it all," says Massenet of her remarkable country retreat. "The house is like a backdrop for magical moments. It's all about us reconnecting, with ourselves and with each other." **VL** *@natalie_massenet @eriktorstensson @pjosephstudio*

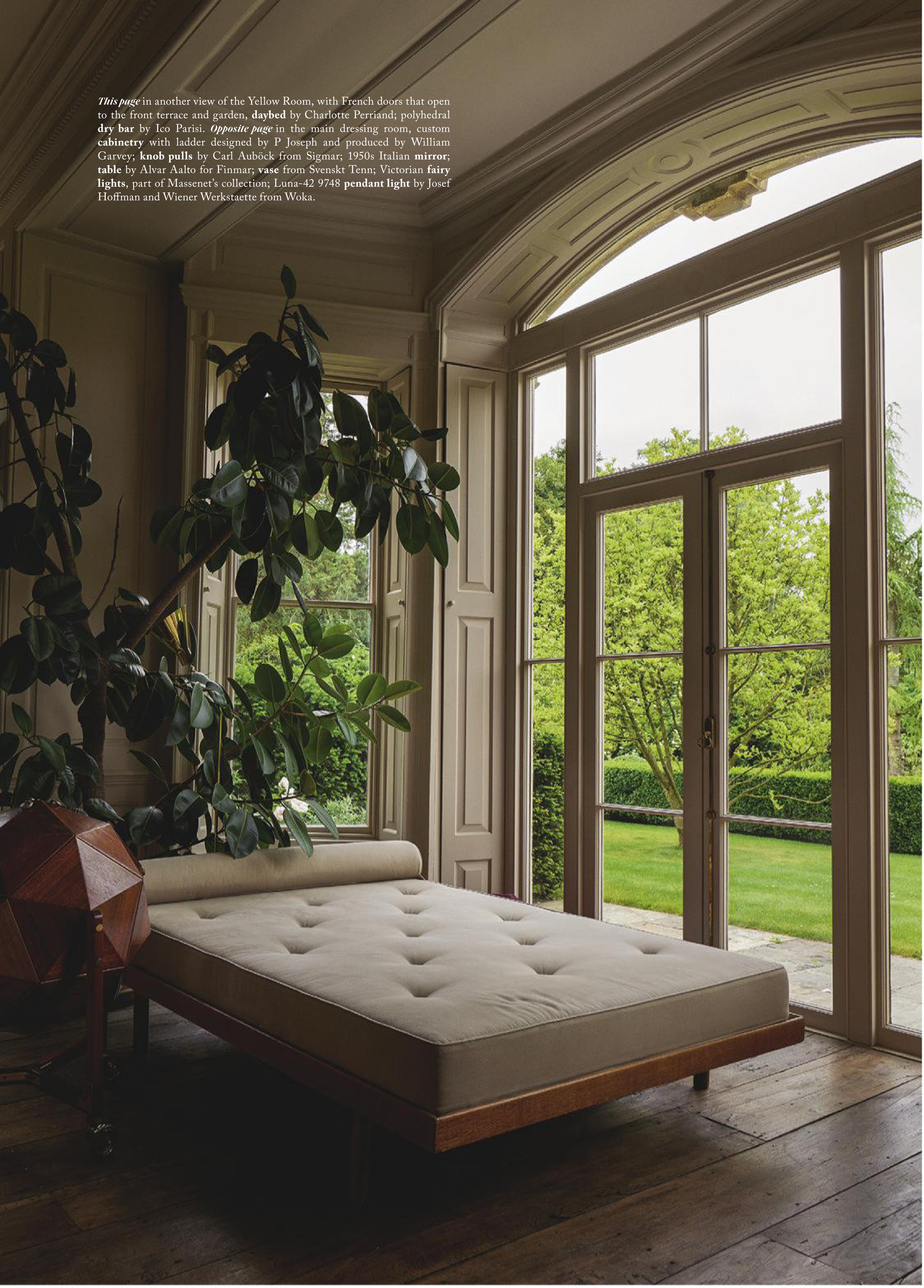


This page in the Yellow Room, the formal living room, 1971 **sofas** in custom yellow satin upholstery and 1971 Cube **chairs** in custom yellow velvet by Charles Pfister for Knoll; Floating Stone **coffee tables** by Axel Vervoordt; black ceramic **candelabra** from Accolay; 1940s Finland **floor lamp** with handmade raffia shade with red trimming, red leather-covered pole and brass base by Lisa Johansson Pape for Orno; Easel **lamp** by Angelo Lelle for Arredoluce; framed **lithograph** (on left) by Pablo Picasso; **artwork** (on wall) by Imi Knoebel.



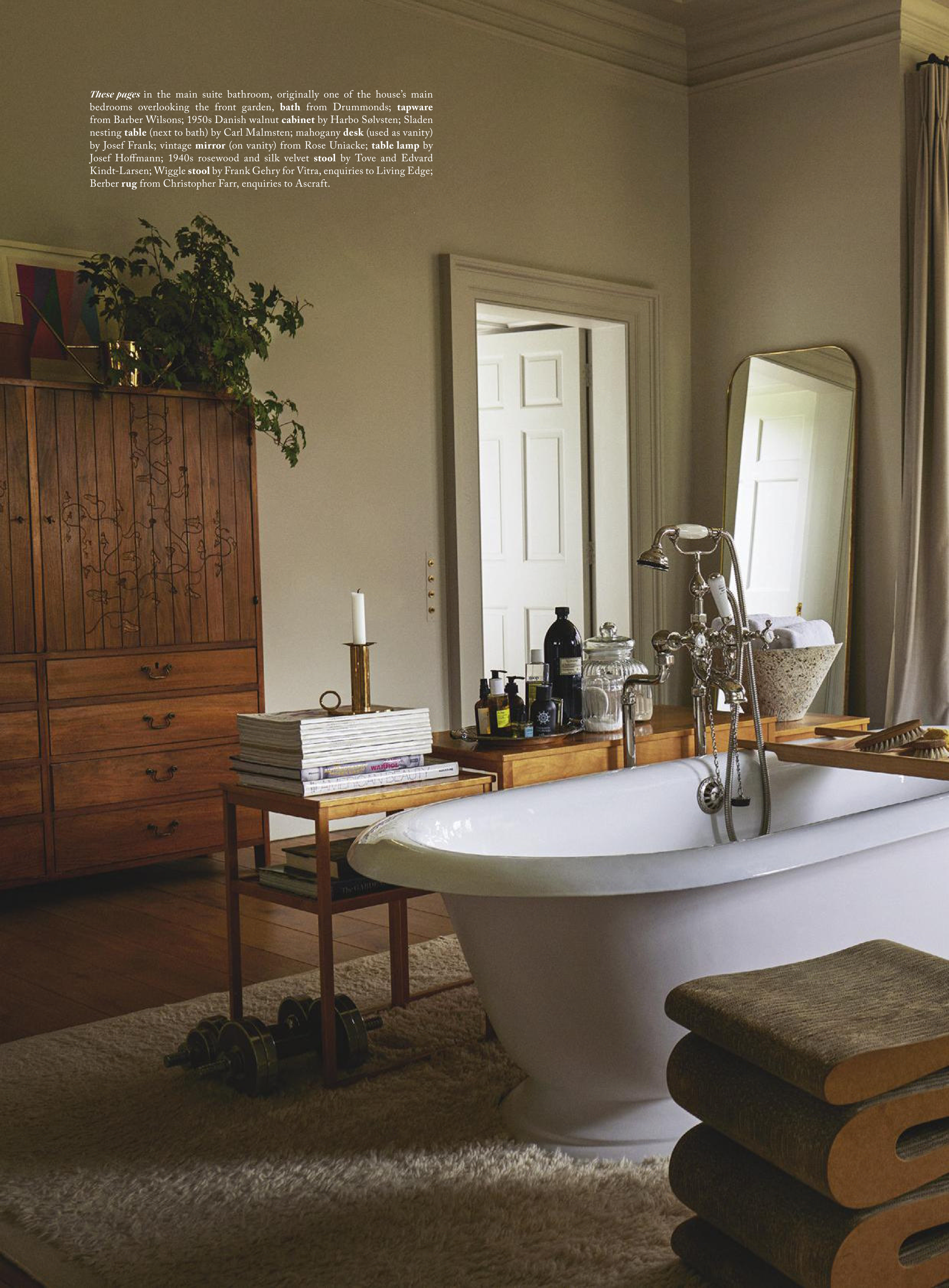
This page in the formal dining room, ceramic **vessels** by Paul Philp; **cabinet** by Erik Chambert for AB Chamberts Möbelfabrik; **candlesticks** from Auctionet and Svenskt Tenn. ***Opposite page*** in the Green Room, a mixed-use space that functions as a cinema, party room or informal lounging area, leather and polished aluminum **chairs** by Mats Theselius; Cousy **sofas** by Vincent van Duysen for Arflex, enquiries to Space Furniture; sofas in custom ribbed velvet upholstery; custom oak **table** designed by P Joseph; custom **window seat** designed by P Joseph and produced by Jerome Shorter Furniture; velvet **cushions** from House of Hackney; Akari UF5-32N **floor lamp** by Isamu Noguchi from WA Design Gallery, enquiries for reissue to Living Edge; 1960s Model B-138 brass **table lamp** with fringing by Hans-Agne Jakobsson; *Achronie VIII* resin, plaster and pigment totem **sculpture** by Marion Verboom; *Aeratta* (1966) black copper **sculpture** by Eric Grate; **plants** throughout the home sourced through JamJar Flowers.

These pages on the grounds, the Half Moon swimming **pool** designed by Miranda Brooks surrounded by cloud-pruned yew hedging.



This page in another view of the Yellow Room, with French doors that open to the front terrace and garden, **daybed** by Charlotte Perriand; polyhedral **dry bar** by Ico Parisi. ***Opposite page*** in the main dressing room, custom **cabinetry** with ladder designed by P Joseph and produced by William Garvey; **knob pulls** by Carl Auböck from Sigmar; 1950s Italian **mirror**; **table** by Alvar Aalto for Finmar; **vase** from Svenskt Tenn; Victorian **fairy lights**, part of Massenet's collection; Luna-42 9748 **pendant light** by Josef Hoffman and Wiener Werkstaette from Woka.

These pages in the main suite bathroom, originally one of the house's main bedrooms overlooking the front garden, **bath** from Drummonds; **tapware** from Barber Wilsons; 1950s Danish walnut **cabinet** by Harbo Sølvsten; Sladen nesting **table** (next to bath) by Carl Malmsten; mahogany **desk** (used as vanity) by Josef Frank; vintage **mirror** (on vanity) from Rose Uniacke; **table lamp** by Josef Hoffmann; 1940s rosewood and silk velvet **stool** by Tove and Edvard Kindt-Larsen; Wiggle **stool** by Frank Gehry for Vitra, enquiries to Living Edge; Berber **rug** from Christopher Farr, enquiries to Ascraft.

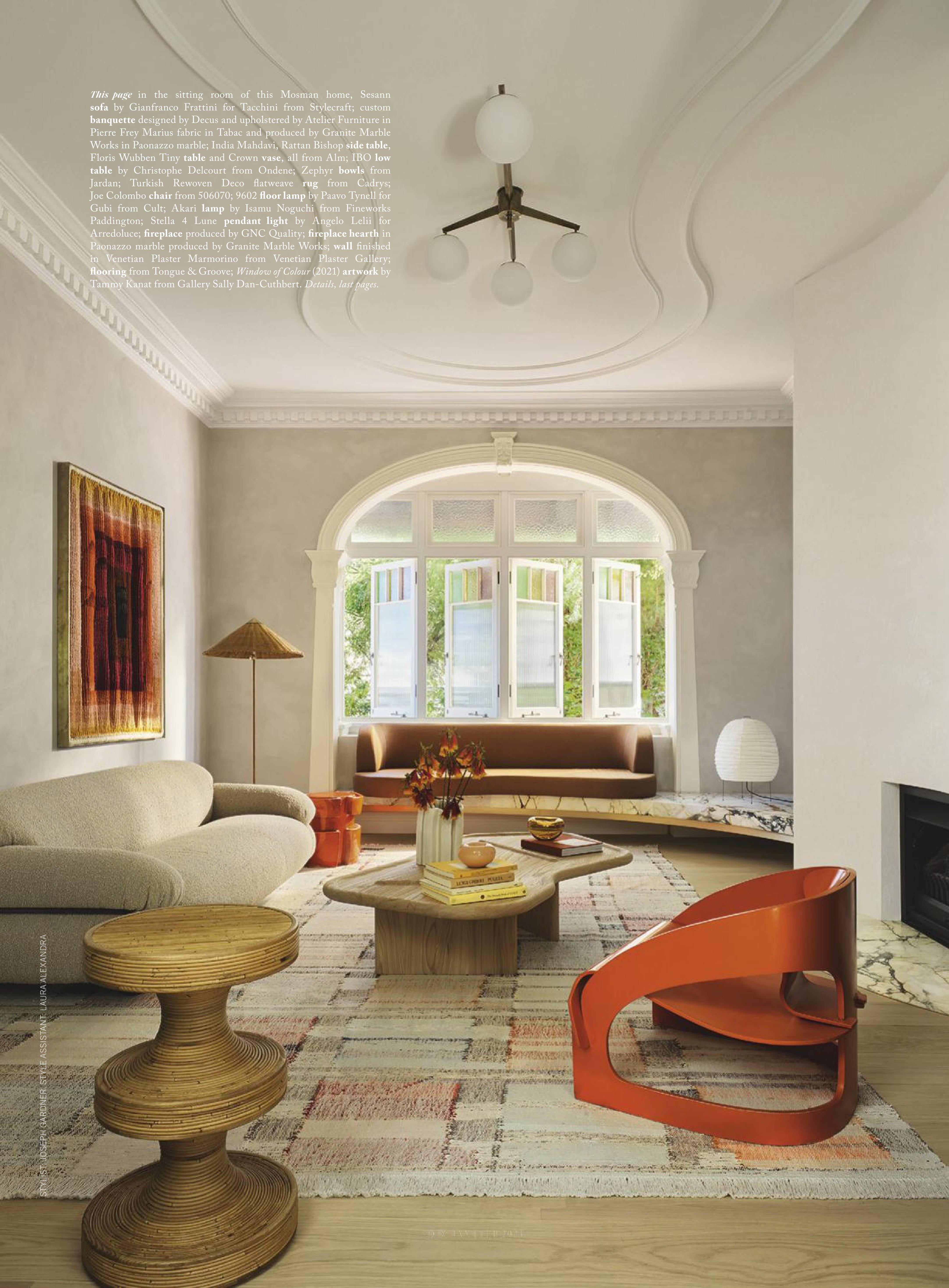


This page the new astroturf and sand tennis court, lined by wild oxeye daisies and cenolophium. ***Opposite page*** in the walkway, which is used as a reading nook, to the boot room and butler's pantry, vintage **sofa** reupholstered in gold mohair velvet and **pendant lamp** from Rose Uniacke; **table** by Pier Luigi Colli; **rug** from Christopher Farr, enquiries to Ascraft; **painting** by David Smith. *Details, last pages.*

EASY CHARM

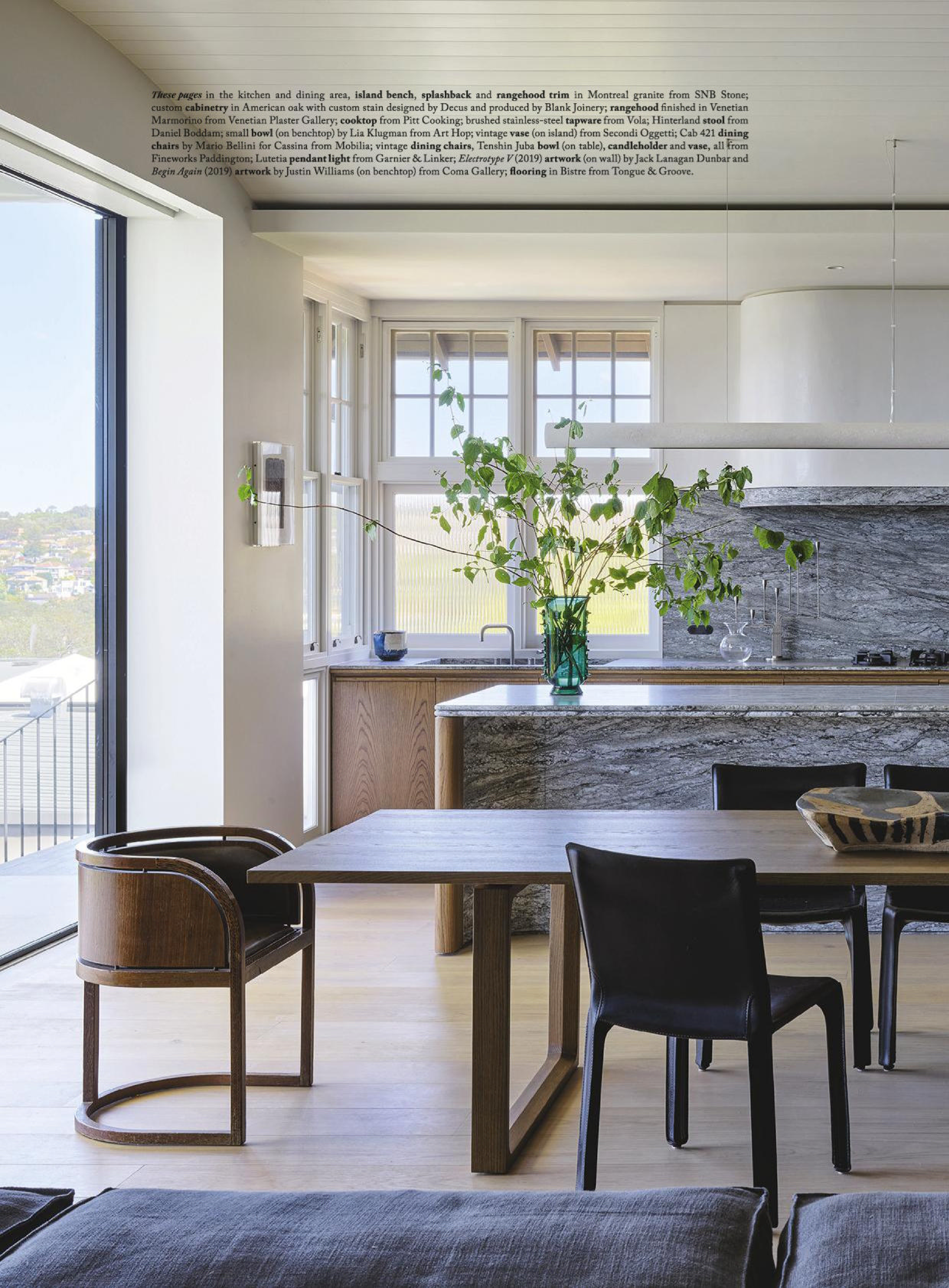
Building upon the character of a Federation house, Decus focuses on getting the balance right for a busy Sydney family through considered detail and relaxed living.

By VIRGINIA JEN *Photographed by* ANSON SMART *Styled by* ATELIER LAB



This page in the sitting room of this Mosman home, Sesann **sofa** by Gianfranco Frattini for Tacchini from Stylecraft; custom **banquette** designed by Decus and upholstered by Atelier Furniture in Pierre Frey Marius fabric in Tabac and produced by Granite Marble Works in Paonazzo marble; India Mahdavi, Rattan Bishop **side table**, Floris Wubben Tiny **table** and Crown **vase**, all from Alm; IBO **low table** by Christophe Delcourt from Ondene; Zephyr **bowls** from Jardan; Turkish Rewoven Deco flatweave **rug** from Cadrys; Joe Colombo **chair** from 506070; 9602 **floor lamp** by Paavo Tynell for Gubi from Cult; Akari **lamp** by Isamu Noguchi from Fineworks Paddington; Stella 4 Lune **pendant light** by Angelo Lelii for Arredoluce; **fireplace** produced by GNC Quality; **fireplace hearth** in Paonazzo marble produced by Granite Marble Works; **wall** finished in Venetian Plaster Marmorino from Venetian Plaster Gallery; **flooring** from Tongue & Groove; *Window of Colour* (2021) **artwork** by Tammy Kanat from Gallery Sally Dan-Cuthbert. *Details, last pages.*

STYLIST: JOSEPH GARDNER. STYLE ASSISTANT: LAURA ALEXANDRA



These pages in the kitchen and dining area, **island bench**, **splashback** and **rangehood trim** in Montreal granite from SNB Stone; custom **cabinetry** in American oak with custom stain designed by Decus and produced by Blank Joinery; **rangehood** finished in Venetian Marmorino from Venetian Plaster Gallery; **cooktop** from Pitt Cooking; brushed stainless-steel **tapware** from Vola; Hinterland **stool** from Daniel Boddam; small **bowl** (on benchtop) by Lia Klugman from Art Hop; vintage **vase** (on island) from Secondi Oggetti; Cab 421 **dining chairs** by Mario Bellini for Cassina from Mobilia; vintage **dining chairs**, Tenshin Juba **bowl** (on table), **candleholder** and **vase**, all from Fineworks Paddington; Lutetia **pendant light** from Garnier & Linker; *Electrotype V* (2019) **artwork** (on wall) by Jack Lanagan Dunbar and *Begin Again* (2019) **artwork** by Justin Williams (on benchtop) from Coma Gallery; **flooring** in Bistre from Tongue & Groove.

Taking on the duty of crafting a home is an aspect of interior design Alexandra Donohoe Church enthusiastically embraces. The founder and managing director of Decus sees her role as a conduit of a client's needs and a guiding hand in opening up possibilities, often before they're even aware of them. "It's an intuitive thing," she muses. "There's cues that you pick up on, the clothes they wear, the art they like, the colours they gravitate towards, the way they communicate, and the way they live. We are part therapists — we have to be able to read a client because just giving them what I like or what's hot right now isn't doing my job."

The job becomes a little easier if the client is someone you've worked with in the past and have known for the best part of a decade. Donohoe Church has seen the busy young family of five grow not only with the passage of time but a change of lifestyle, having moved from a contemporary glass-and-steel dwelling in Sydney's Balmoral to an early 1900s red-barrel-brick Federation home just around the corner in harbourside Mosman. "They came into it open-minded and were really trusting," she says. "And trust is crucial in any project because it's such a long process — it's three or four years and you're making thousands of decisions across that time period."

"We just knew that we needed to give them something that was easy and smooth," continues Donohoe Church. "The whole thing, right down to the aesthetic, had to be easy to process. We didn't want to give them a fiddly home, something that felt too detailed or too overcooked, because then it feels like you have to maintain that kind of life."

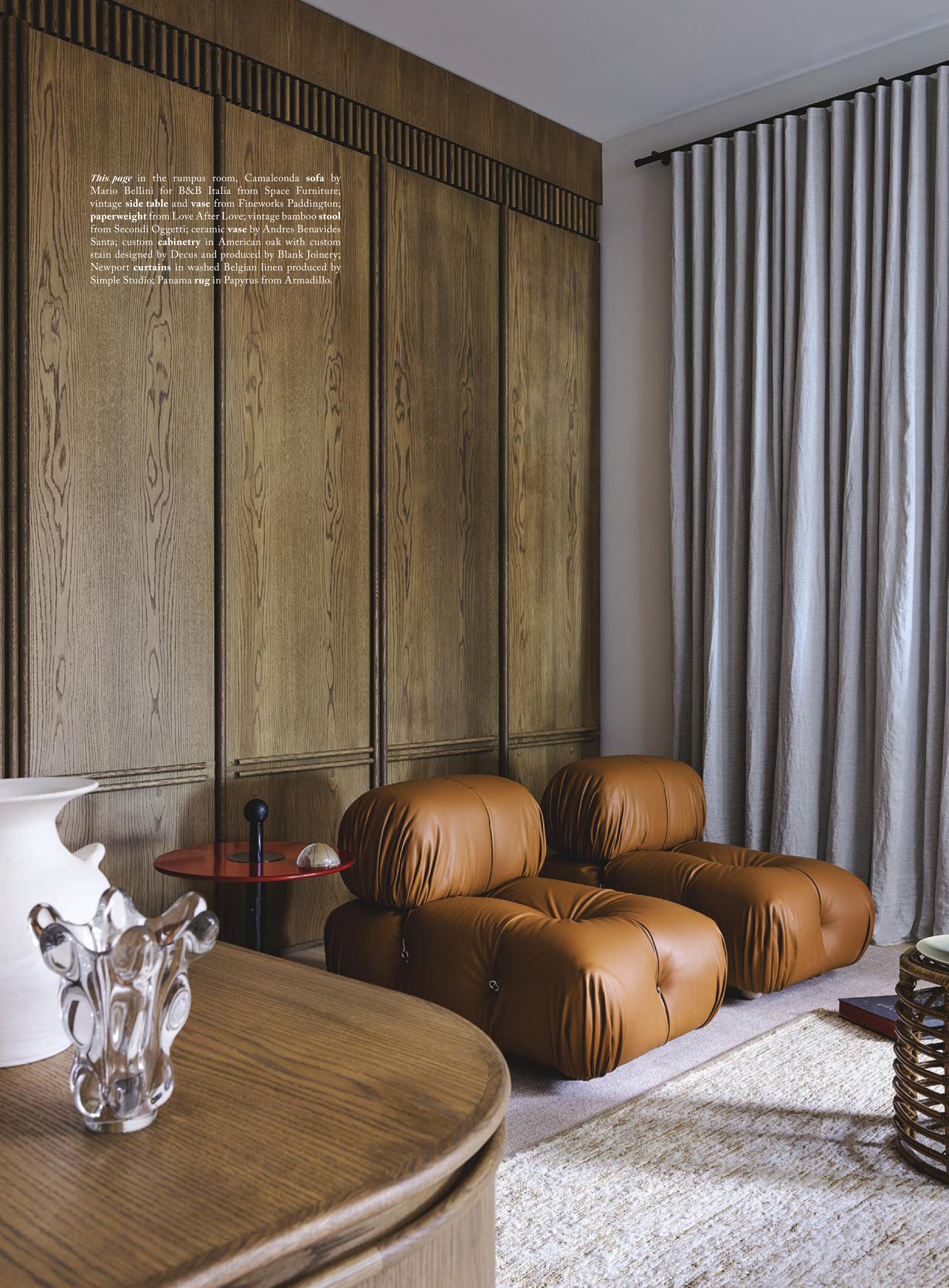
> "Everyone that I've walked through the project with — they're in awe of all the details, which is really lovely"

In order to marry the house to the active family's lifestyle, the footprint of the original home was added upon by Luigi Rosselli Architects, smartly fine-tuning natural light cast into new spaces. The delicacy of the filtered light against robust materials formed the foundation for Decus to weave in detail and warmth, a contrast to the sleeker aesthetic of the client's previous home. "It is much more layered, it's more nuanced," says Donohoe Church. "We've paid particular attention to wanting the house to feel just as fresh in 10 years. We've invested more energy this time around in getting the balance between pushing it a little bit but also pulling back."

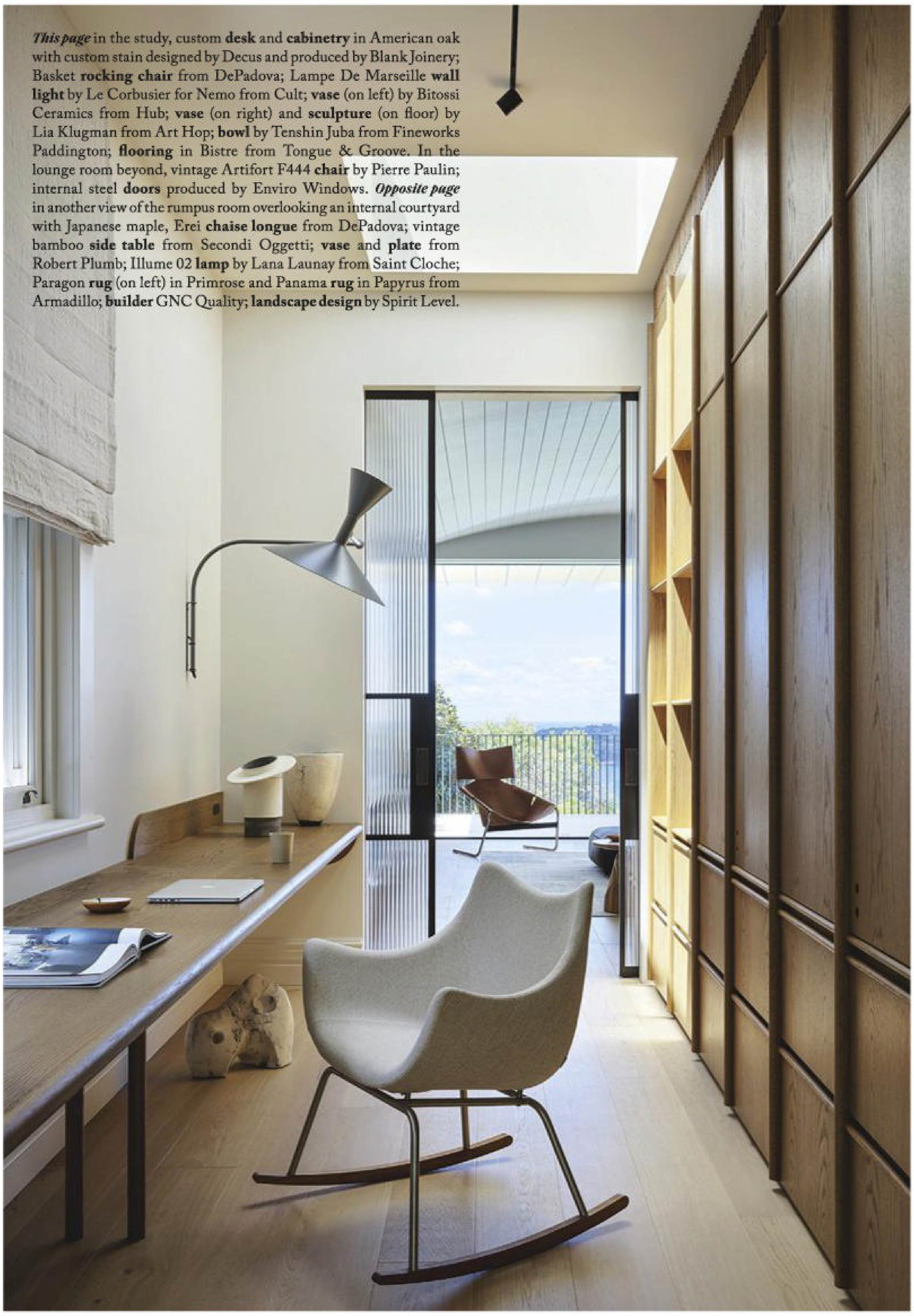
Getting the right mix of interest and introspection is expressed here through a potent blend of eye-catching material and contrasting texture realised in moments where the elements seem to be conversing with one another. Pour your eye over the entry foyer floor, a polished patterned inlay of three neutrally toned stones grounding the space and echoed in the home's bathrooms, albeit with a bolder palette. Towards the rear of the home where the kitchen, living and dining spaces open up to pristine water views, fluted glass and banks of refined timber storage — complete with finger pull-out handles and smooth double-bullnose edges — bring tactility that is perfectly complemented by the soft curves of the archways and the vaulted ceiling. This combination is epitomised by the sitting room with details that draw upon the home's Federation heritage. Sitting pretty under stained-glass windows is built-in upholstered seating that was "probably the furthest we could push the client with colour," says Donohoe Church.

Knowing when and where to influence all comes back to the serenity the designer wanted in a space tailored for easy living. In the upper-level main bedroom, the solution was obvious with framed ocean vistas proving a relaxing salve, while other decisions needed further scrutiny to provide effortless relaxation. For Donohoe Church, "there's a sense of actual comfort. It's a combination of all of the things you physically touch and making sure those choices are right, as well as a visual calm, finding things that are appealing and soothing to someone's eye. Designing is about teasing that out of the client — what they find calming — and then weaving that into what we find calming, and then looking at it in context."

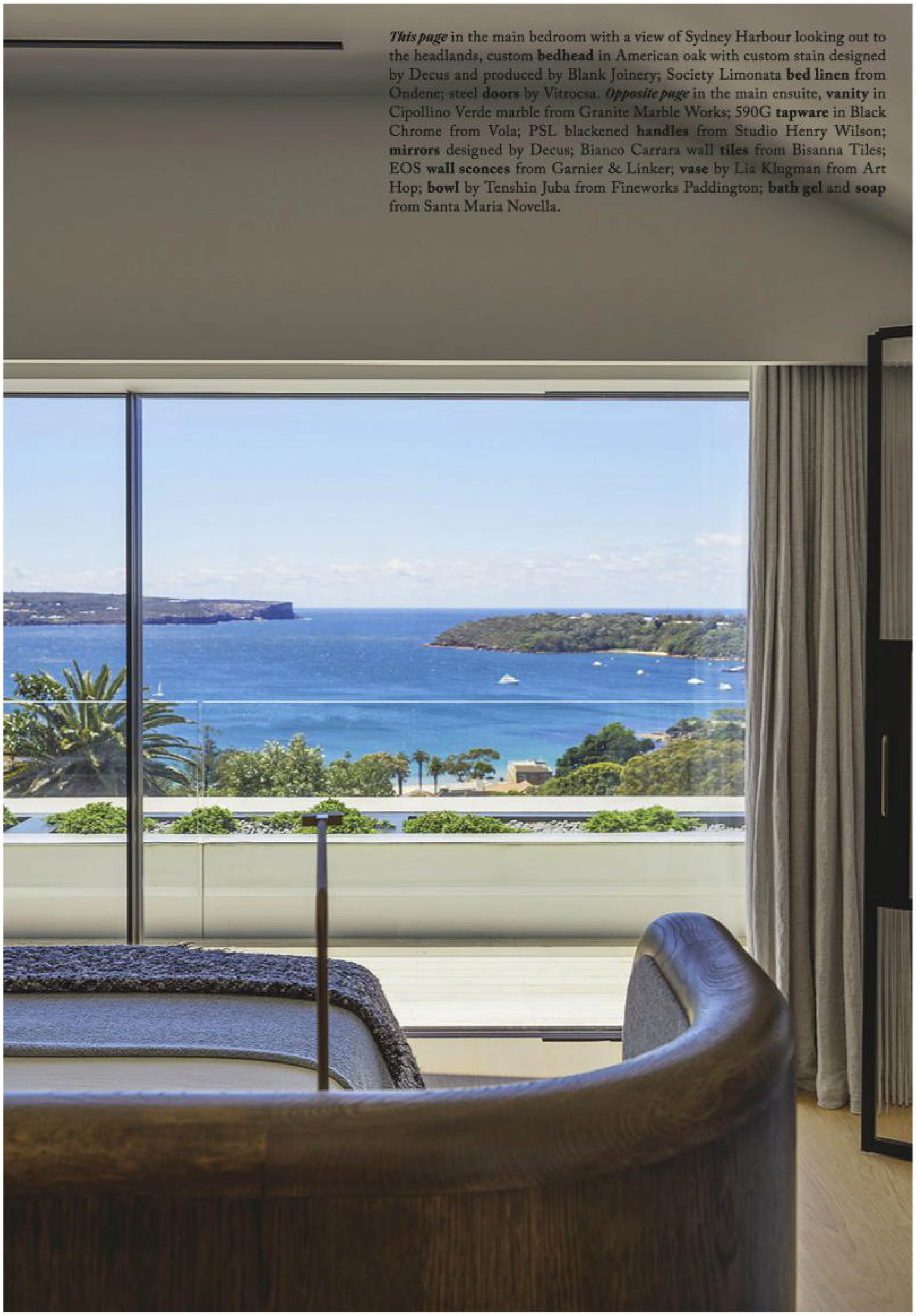
As to that context, it's proven to be a bit of a surprise for the designer. "It's kind of a quiet achiever — I didn't expect it to be such a crowd-pleaser," says Donohoe Church of the home. "Everyone that I've walked through the project with — they're in awe of all of the details, which is really lovely." VL *decus.com.au*



This page in the rumpus room, Camaleonda **sofa** by Mario Bellini for B&B Italia from Space Furniture; vintage **side table** and **vase** from Fineworks Paddington; **paperweight** from Love After Love; vintage bamboo **stool** from Secondi Oggetti; ceramic **vase** by Andres Benavides Santa; custom **cabinetry** in American oak with custom stain designed by Decus and produced by Blank Joinery; Newport **curtains** in washed Belgian linen produced by Simple Studio; Panama **rug** in Papyrus from Armadillo.



This page in the study, custom **desk** and **cabinetry** in American oak with custom stain designed by Decus and produced by Blank Joinery; Basket **rocking chair** from DePadova; Lampe De Marseille **wall light** by Le Corbusier for Nemo from Cult; **vase** (on left) by Bitossi Ceramics from Hub; **vase** (on right) and **sculpture** (on floor) by Lia Klugman from Art Hop; **bowl** by Tenshin Juba from Fineworks Paddington; **flooring** in Bistre from Tongue & Groove. In the lounge room beyond, vintage Artifort F444 **chair** by Pierre Paulin; internal steel **doors** produced by Enviro Windows. ***Opposite page*** in another view of the rumpus room overlooking an internal courtyard with Japanese maple, Erei **chaise longue** from DePadova; vintage bamboo **side table** from Secondi Oggetti; **vase** and **plate** from Robert Plumb; Illume 02 **lamp** by Lana Launay from Saint Cloche; Paragon **rug** (on left) in Primrose and Panama **rug** in Papyrus from Armadillo; **builder** GNC Quality; **landscape design** by Spirit Level.



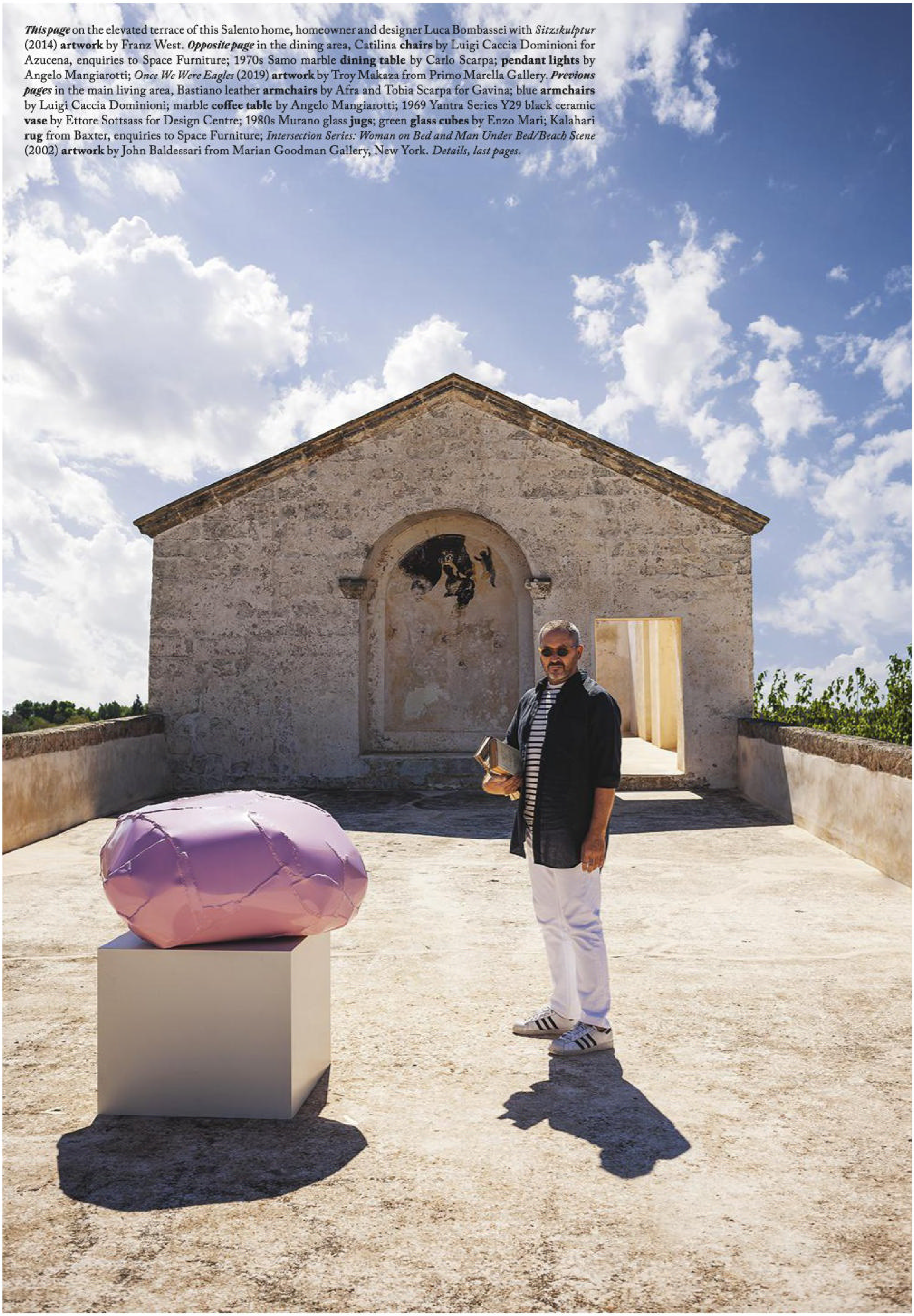
This page in the main bedroom with a view of Sydney Harbour looking out to the headlands, custom **bedhead** in American oak with custom stain designed by Decus and produced by Blank Joinery; Society Limonata **bed linen** from Ondene; steel **doors** by Vitrocsa. ***Opposite page*** in the main ensuite, **vanity** in Cipollino Verde marble from Granite Marble Works; 590G **tapware** in Black Chrome from Vola; PSL blackened **handles** from Studio Henry Wilson; **mirrors** designed by Decus; Bianco Carrara wall **tiles** from Bisanna Tiles; EOS **wall sconces** from Garnier & Linker; **vase** by Lia Klugman from Art Hop; **bowl** by Tenshin Juba from Fineworks Paddington; **bath gel** and **soap** from Santa Maria Novella.

This page on the balcony, Swisspearl Dune Centre **chair**, Porto **stool** and Porto **low table**, all from Robert Plumb. ***Opposite page*** in the first-floor bathroom, **vanity** in Grigio San Marco marble from Euro Marble; City Plus Wall Spout **tapware** from Brodware; Potato Cabinet Knob **handles** from Rocky Mountain Hardware; **wall** finished in Venetian Plaster Marmorino from Venetian Plaster Gallery; custom **mirror** designed by Decus; Anton ceramic **wall light** from Volker Haug; *Skip* (2021) **stool** by David Tate and *Brawn* (2022) **sculpture** (on vanity) by Olive Gill-Hille from Gallery Sally Dan-Cuthbert; **vase** (far left) by Lia Klugman from Art Hop; Tamegroute Sunflower **candleholder** from Love After Love; **flooring** in Aren Bianco limestone from Onsite. *Details, last pages.*

Artistic Spirit

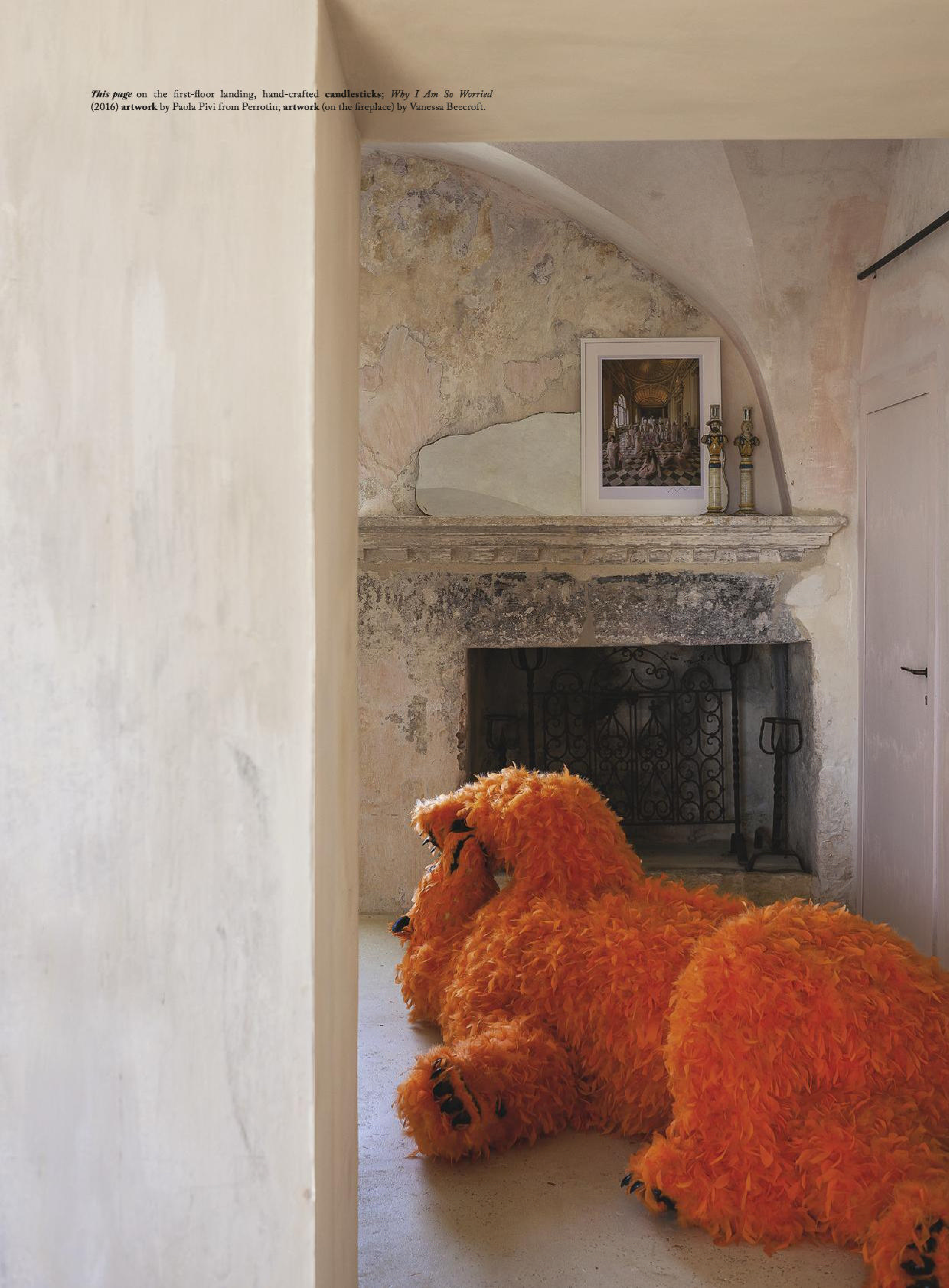
Within the fortified walls of a 16th-century farmhouse, architect Luca Bombassei's monumental art collection and life's passion find sanctuary and ceremony.

By LINDYL CRABB
Photographed by ANDREA FERRARI



This page on the elevated terrace of this Salento home, homeowner and designer Luca Bombassei with *Sitzskulptur* (2014) **artwork** by Franz West. ***Opposite page*** in the dining area, Catilina **chairs** by Luigi Caccia Dominioni for Azucena, enquiries to Space Furniture; 1970s Samo marble **dining table** by Carlo Scarpa; **pendant lights** by Angelo Mangiarotti; *Once We Were Eagles* (2019) **artwork** by Troy Makaza from Primo Marella Gallery. ***Previous pages*** in the main living area, Bastiano leather **armchairs** by Afra and Tobia Scarpa for Gavina; blue **armchairs** by Luigi Caccia Dominioni; marble **coffee table** by Angelo Mangiarotti; 1969 Yantra Series Y29 black ceramic **vase** by Ettore Sottsass for Design Centre; 1980s Murano glass **jugs**; green **glass cubes** by Enzo Mari; Kalahari **rug** from Baxter, enquiries to Space Furniture; *Intersection Series: Woman on Bed and Man Under Bed/Beach Scene* (2002) **artwork** by John Baldessari from Marian Goodman Gallery, New York. *Details, last pages.*

This page on the first-floor landing, hand-crafted **candlesticks**; *Why I Am So Worried* (2016) **artwork** by Paola Pivi from Perrotin; **artwork** (on the fireplace) by Vanessa Beecroft.



T

“The greatest loves are probably the ones that happen by chance, when you don’t expect them,” contemplates architect and entrepreneur Luca Bombassei. The love Bombassei is referring to, in this case, is his relationship with Salento, the southernmost region of Puglia and the land upon which his farmhouse was built in the late 1500s. Salento is grazed by sea on two sides but its soul is the countryside, all olive trees and grassy fields criss-crossed by stone walls so old they too came from this earth. On a visit to the region, by chance, Bombassei was looking for a space for hosting friends, artists and their works. “I don’t have Apulian origins, I just happened down here as a tourist,” says Bombassei, whose two studios are based in and around Milan. “When I found this ancient structure immersed in the countryside, I realised that the building had great potential.”

A fortified masseria comprised of a two-level building with terraces and a central courtyard protected by a wall, the property, Bombassei says, dates back to the 16th century. “Unfortunately, its state of conservation was disastrous, with a series of awful recent interventions that spoiled its original beauty — reinforced concrete stairs, layers with no respect for the historical structure, graffiti sketched onto the plaster, hiding the drawing of the facades,” he laments. Several decorative elements had been stolen, too — the chapel’s altar and original fireplaces once present in each room were no longer there.

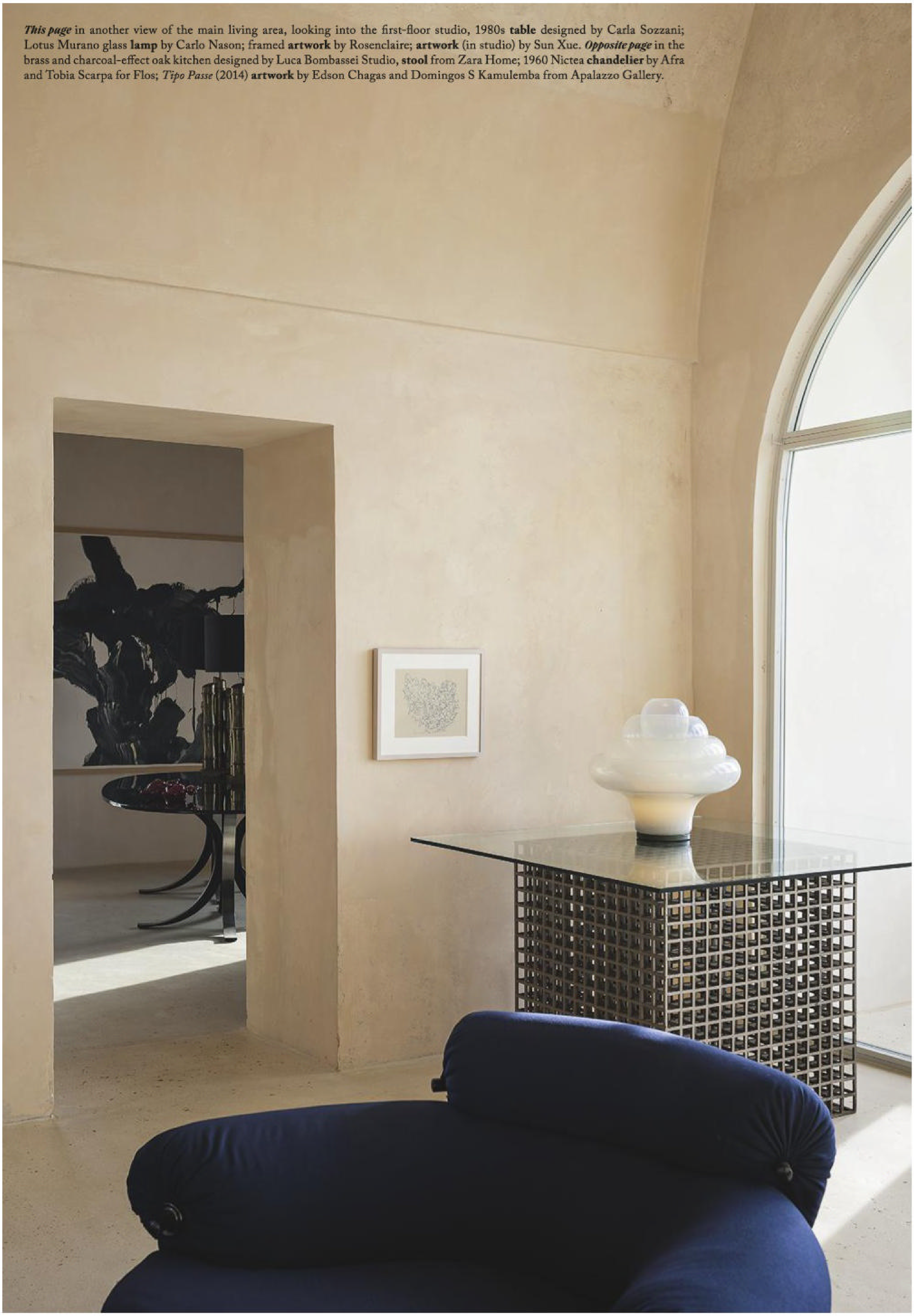
> “I didn’t want to make this masseria a typical holiday home. Art is an essential part of my life; it was unavoidable to fill this home with it”

The farmhouse’s three-year restoration reflects the work Bombassei does outside the studio: the architect promotes emerging artists while simultaneously safeguarding Italian artistic heritage as president of the Venice International Foundation. “I wanted to increase the value of the original architecture with its strength and character, respecting it as much as possible with a maniacal attention,” he says of the undertaking, which involved subtracting rather than adding elements to the pre-existing structure. “One of the most exciting aspects of the work was the possibility to get deeply in touch with the local area. I tried to get familiar with the local restoration techniques and ways of cutting stones.”

Porticoed spaces to welcome guests and relax in are located on the ground floor. Shaded by large star vaults, they’re particularly lovely in the summer. In other areas, Bombassei chose not to rebuild portions of the house in order to create open-air rooms. Living areas are connected to a courtyard via arched French doors, but the sense of repose that settles on the retreat comes from beyond its walls. “Outside the house you can contemplate the rows of olive trees, and the intense nature of Salento. This is where you get the real feeling of calm and relaxation,” says Bombassei. “I’m thrilled to take shelter in this beautiful land.”

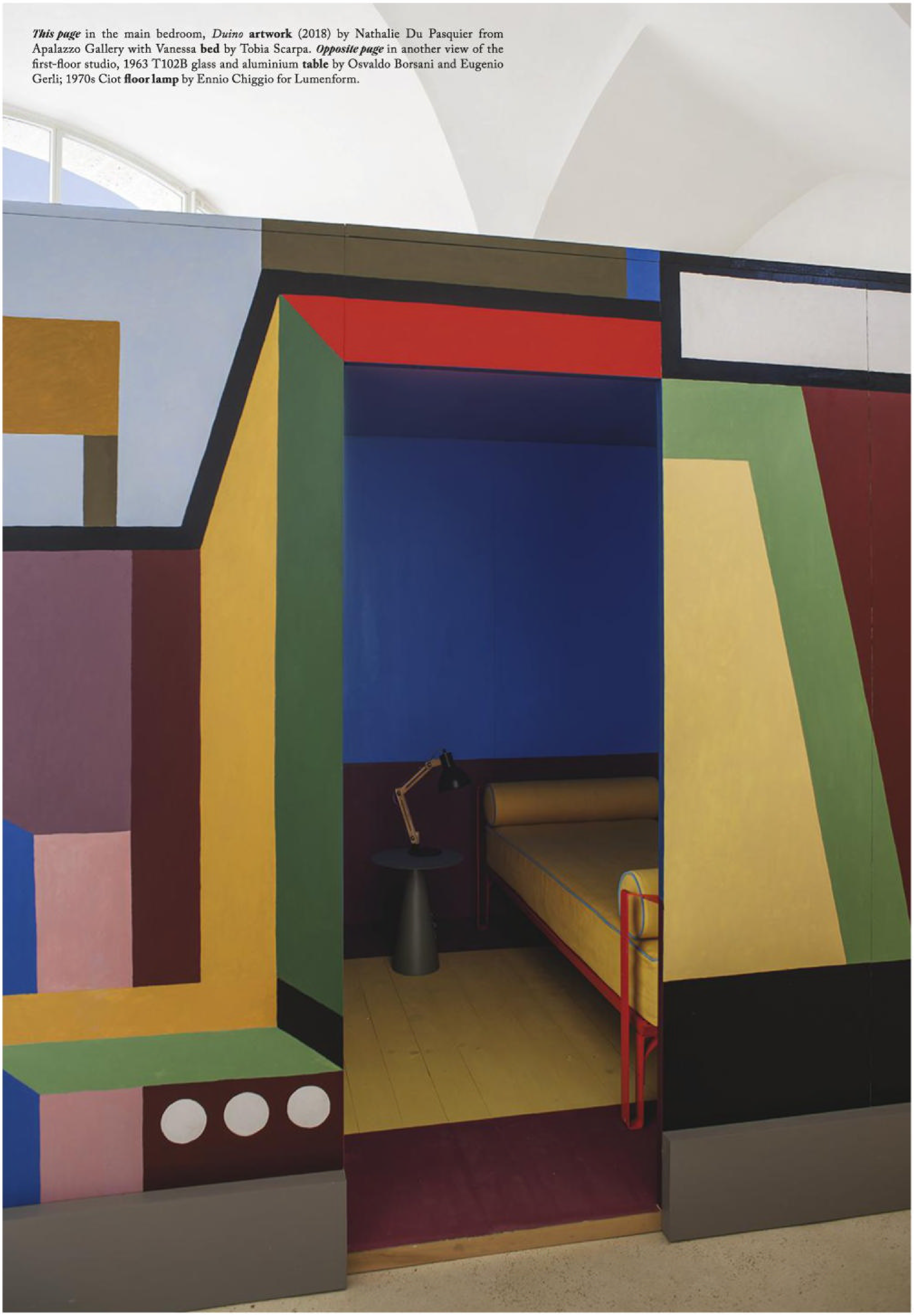
More than a bucolic weekend abode, this is a large-scale expression of Bombassei’s passion for design and art. “I didn’t want to make this masseria a typical holiday home — I wanted to bring something of my own sensibility, some classical Italian design and contemporary art. I needed to bring my lifestyle with me,” he says. “I was interested in mixing the local architecture with urban elements, bringing furniture inspired by classical Italian design: Sottsass, Scarpa and Mendini. These pieces are not common in a place like this, but they mirror my way of understanding the space.” The masseria is his “nest”, a place that represents who he is, and his art collection is at its heart. “When it comes to art and design, my ideas and choices have an inner coherence, strictly connected to my experiences and taste — they are independent from the world outside,” Bombassei says. “My choices are mostly driven by instinct, or my falling in love with the artwork.” Though he acknowledges the landscape and architecture must be respected in the process, he’s the first to confess “passion and beauty remain my main sources of inspiration”.

The architect has collected art for 20 years, and he suspects something inherent was at play — his father loved to paint but was forced to pursue a different path. As he puts it: “Art is an essential part of my life; it was unavoidable to fill this new home with it.” Bombassei rarely buys pieces knowing where they’ll go, and many of the artworks at the farmhouse had been waiting in his collection until he found the right space. He invited artists to create site-specific works and suggest their placement, and every artwork has deep sentimental value, in particular the installation by Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama. The enormous consideration taken in installing each piece is exemplified in the case of the Swiss artist Olivier Mosset. “Once I chose the artwork, I let Olivier decide where to install it, and he chose the terrace of my masseria,” Bombassei says of this work, which will be identifiable by Google Earth. “All of this rises from the relationship with the artists,” Bombassei gestures. “They can shape the future with no limits.” VL *lucabombassei.com*

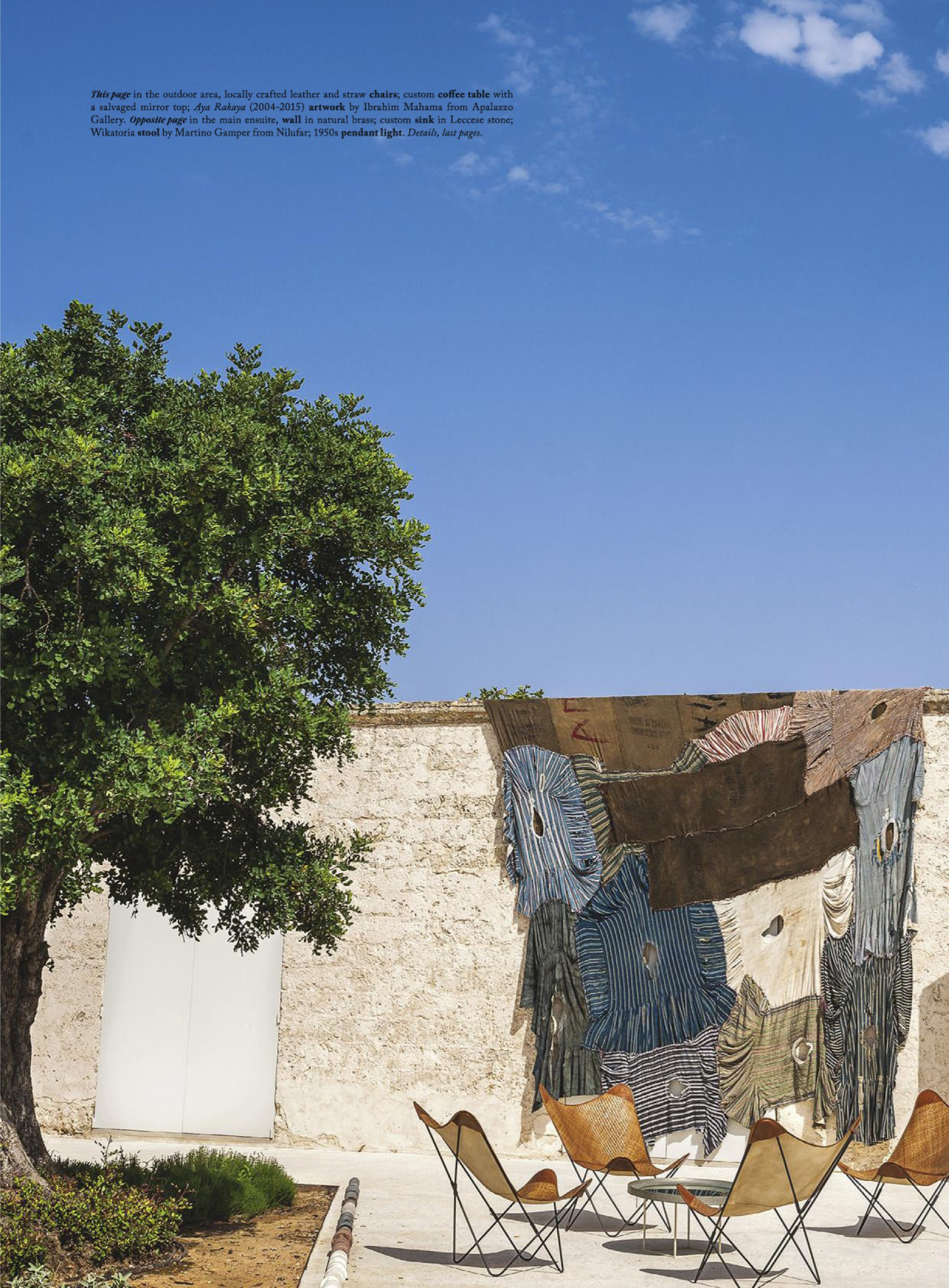


This page in another view of the main living area, looking into the first-floor studio, 1980s **table** designed by Carla Sozzani; Lotus Murano glass **lamp** by Carlo Nason; framed **artwork** by Rosenclaire; **artwork** (in studio) by Sun Xue. ***Opposite page*** in the brass and charcoal-effect oak kitchen designed by Luca Bombassei Studio, **stool** from Zara Home; 1960 Nictea **chandelier** by Afra and Tobia Scarpa for Flos; *Tipo Passe* (2014) **artwork** by Edson Chagas and Domingos S Kamulemba from Apalazzo Gallery.

These pages in the ground-floor porch, Sinnerlig **table** and **chairs** by Ilse Crawford from Ikea.



This page in the main bedroom, *Duino* **artwork** (2018) by Nathalie Du Pasquier from Apalazzo Gallery with Vanessa **bed** by Tobia Scarpa. ***Opposite page*** in another view of the first-floor studio, 1963 T102B glass and aluminium **table** by Osvaldo Borsani and Eugenio Gerli; 1970s Ciot **floor lamp** by Ennio Chiggio for Lumenform.



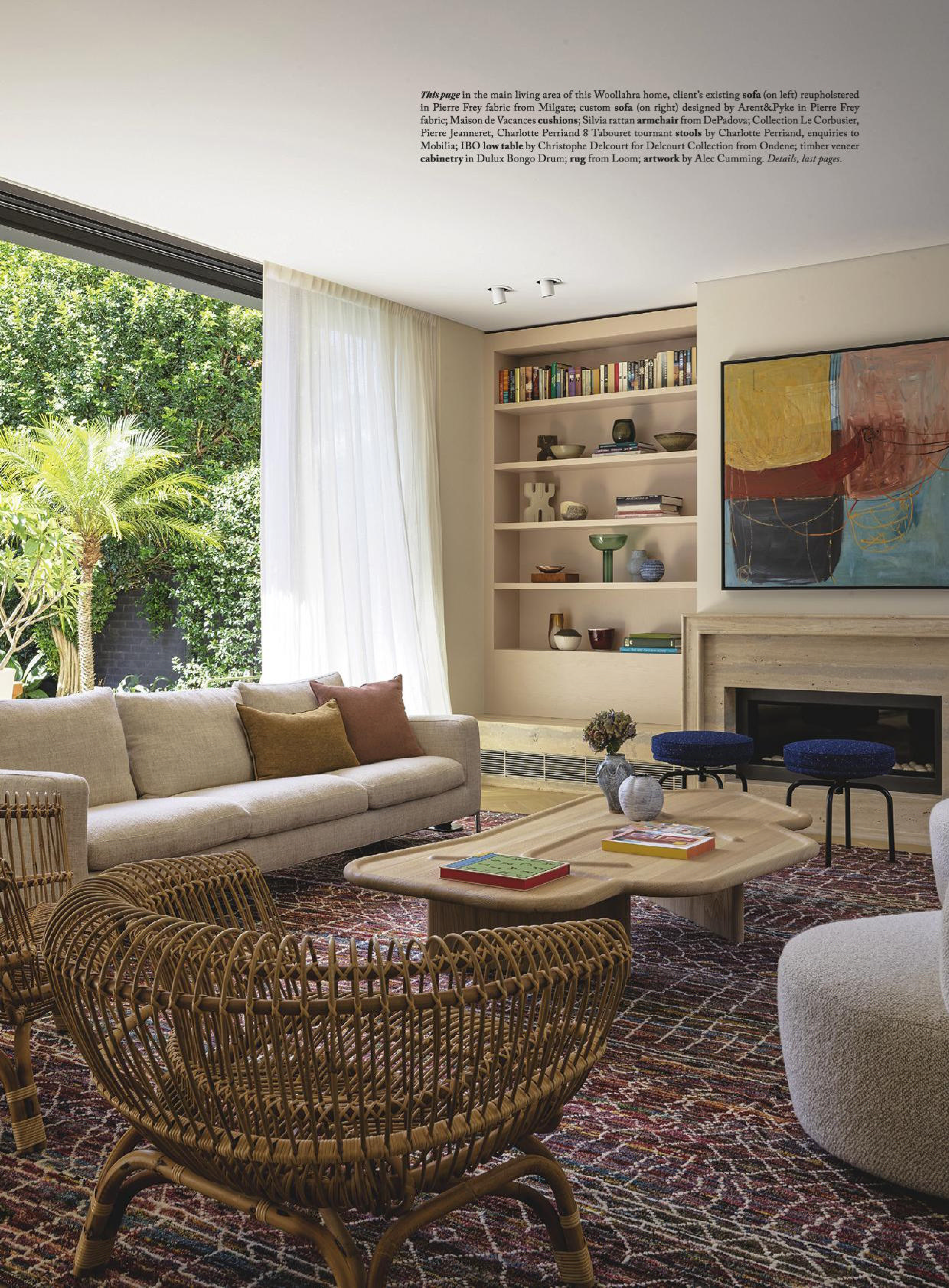
This page in the outdoor area, locally crafted leather and straw **chairs**; custom **coffee table** with a salvaged mirror top; *Aya Rakaya* (2004-2015) **artwork** by Ibrahim Mahama from Apalazzo Gallery. ***Opposite page*** in the main ensuite, **wall** in natural brass; custom **sink** in Leccese stone; Wikatoria **stool** by Martino Gamper from Nilufar; 1950s **pendant light**. *Details, last pages.*

LIVING

A family looked to renowned specialists of tone, texture and character Arent&Pyke to turn over a new leaf in their bright Sydney home.

By FREYA HERRING *Photographed by* ANSON SMART *Styled by* CLAIRE DELMAR

COLOUR



This page in the main living area of this Woollahra home, client's existing **sofa** (on left) reupholstered in Pierre Frey fabric from Milgate; custom **sofa** (on right) designed by Arent&Pyke in Pierre Frey fabric; Maison de Vacances **cushions**; Silvia rattan **armchair** from DePadova; Collection Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Charlotte Perriand 8 Tabouret tournant **stools** by Charlotte Perriand, enquiries to Mobilia; IBO **low table** by Christophe Delcourt for Delcourt Collection from Ondene; timber veneer **cabinetry** in Dulux Bongo Drum; **rug** from Loom; **artwork** by Alec Cumming. *Details, last pages.*

In the 1990s home, colour went off the charts — neon walls and blow-up chairs, multicoloured wires in see-through phones, and lest we forget the lava lamp's gloopy return. Slinking onwards into the new century, interiors in response drew themselves inwards to muted tones and ultimately the pared-back Scandinavian aesthetic that has endured ever since. But now, through the distressing throes of a pandemic, the heartening joy of colour has come back, sometimes through the deeply toned indulgence of maximalism. For Salsa Verde, a newly designed house in the eastern Sydney enclave of Woollahra, it's through a balance of soft colour and ornate detailing played against Scandi-chic refinement and a hint of whimsy. It's a bit of a mood.

The four-bed, five-bath house is a former worker's cottage that was expanded and rejigged by Sam Crawford Architects in 2016. The new owners, a family of five plus two small dogs, appointed Juliette Arent Squadrito and Sarah-Jane Pyke of Sydney design house Arent&Pyke to overhaul the interior after they purchased the property in 2020. "'More colour and more interesting' was our overarching brief," says Arent Squadrito. "The house had a great blend of historic and contemporary architectural detailing, and we were engaged to explore new ideas to bring more colour and reflect our clients' personality into the home. We layered colour, pattern and texture via paint and new furnishings, working with their existing pieces, to make the home feel very personal."

Entering through the threshold, soft light floods the hall with warmth, making an immediate impression that you're entering into a living, breathing home rather than a showpiece. "We used a warm Venetian plaster to line the walls through the front entry foyer — a beautiful and textural way to catch the light and enhance the atmosphere," notes Arent Squadrito. "A velvet-covered Womb chair and sculptural Akari pendant draw you into this small, sunlit haven, serving as the welcoming committee for the rest of the home – a sanctuary of stillness and calm."

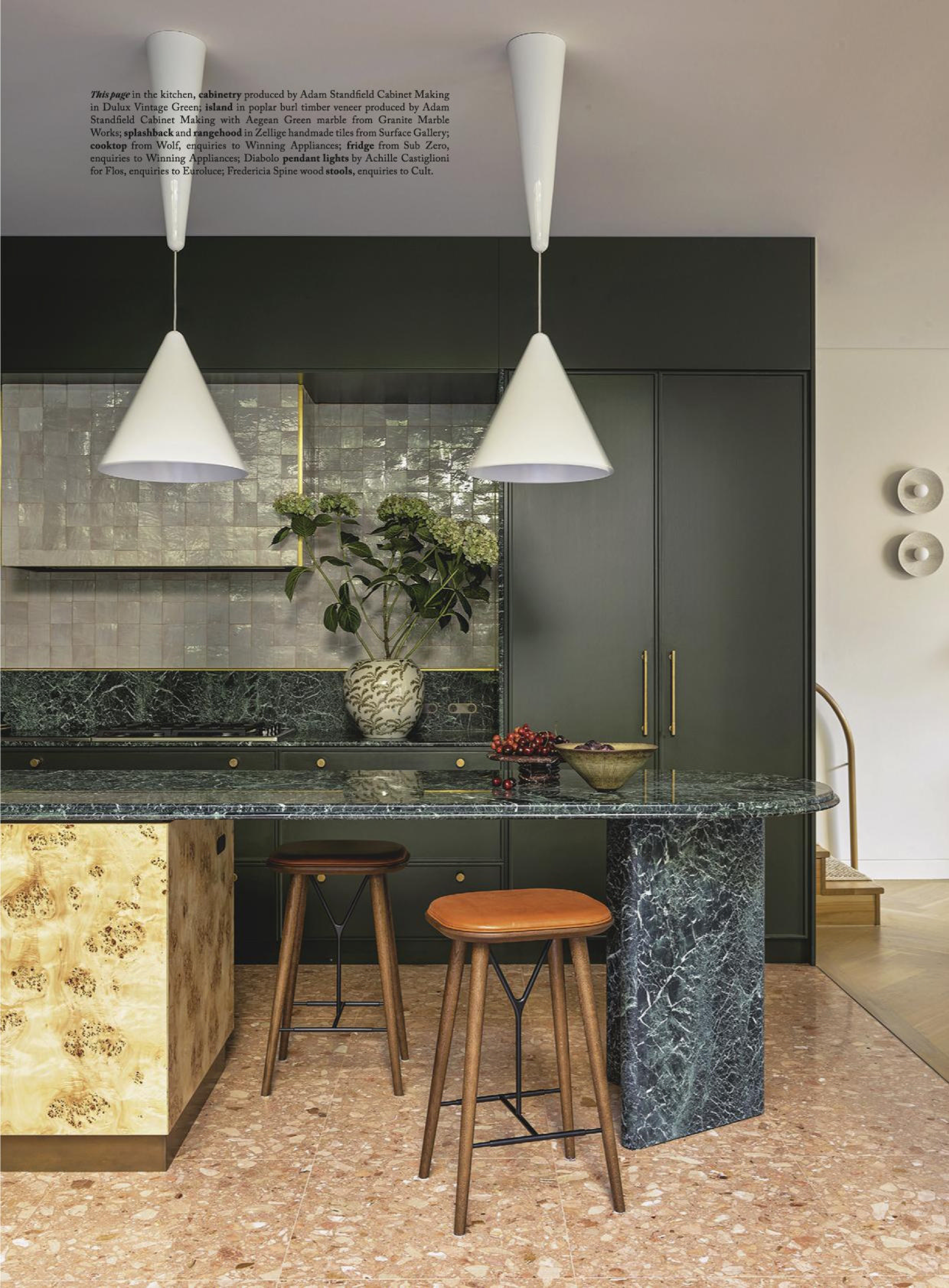
> "We layered colour, pattern and texture via paint and new furnishings, working with existing pieces, to make the home feel very personal"

The feeling of hospitality continues with the vivid palette, a signature of Arent&Pyke's aesthetic. "Our work with colour is at the heart of what we do because of its power to create emotional connection and pure joy, which in turn, fosters wellbeing," says Arent Squadrito. "A thread of soft-pink nougat colour throughout glows with a calming and embracing warmth, while at the same time a vibrant and confident combination of jewel tones generates a playful energy from the living areas through to the kids' bedrooms."

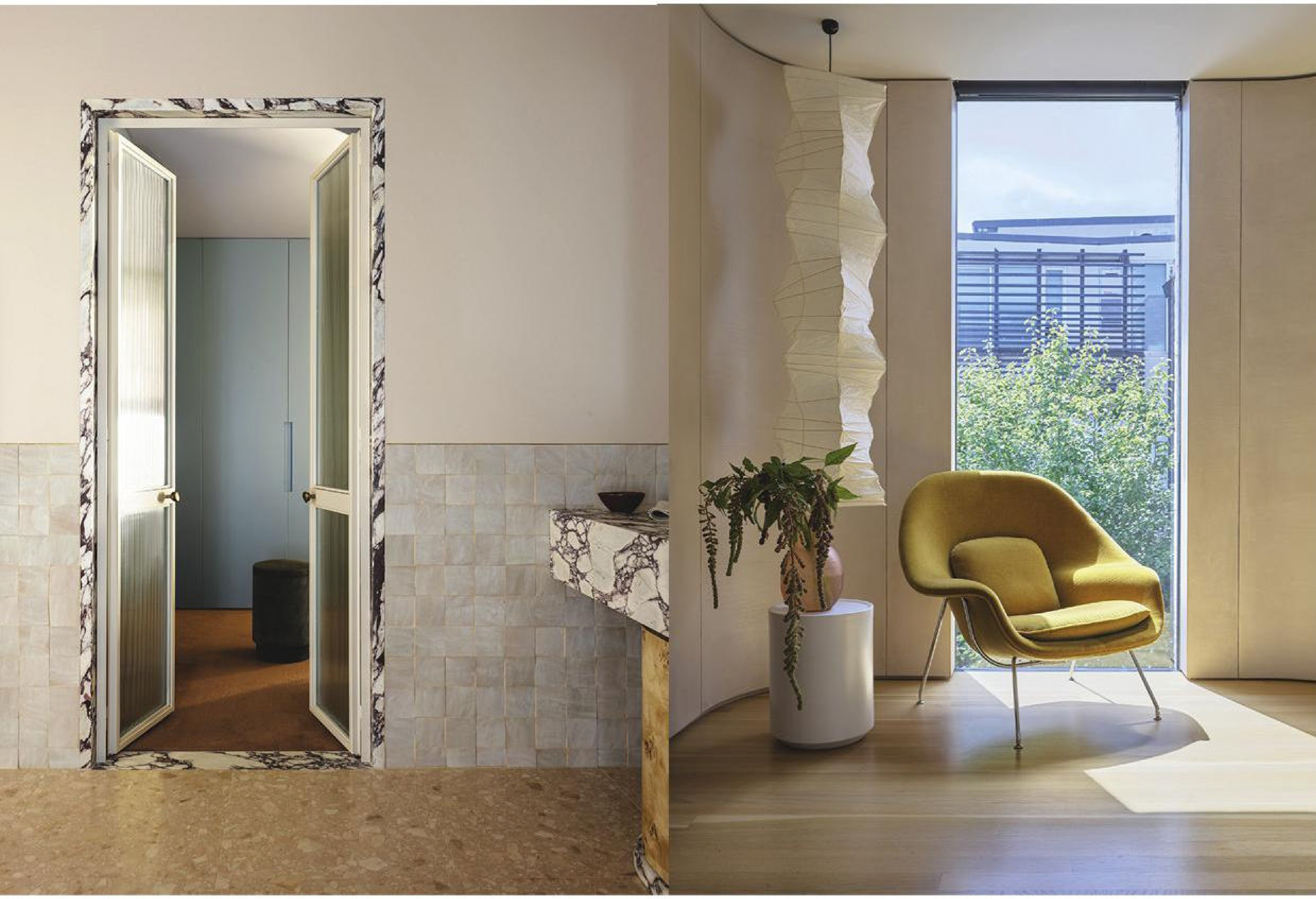
After two decades living in New York and Asia, the clients wanted to incorporate their vibrant, international aesthetic into their new home. "Too often a 'modern' brief means black, white and lots of marble," the clients say. "In some respects, Arent&Pyke is the antithesis of this: lots of bold but soothing colour, layering and organic materials, interesting elements but not full of knick knacks."

The family spent time with the Arent&Pyke team to ensure that the house would not only look amazing, but function efficiently within their lifestyle. "Everything has a purpose or function. The Arent&Pyke team spent a lot of time understanding our life and daily habits, and were incredibly thoughtful in how this translated into the layout and design of the house," they say. "They did a great job of incorporating our most loved furniture and art, which we had accumulated over the past 20 years."

"Our client had an extensive art collection, but they sought our advice with the selection of an Ildiko Kovacs piece that ended up being such an iconic and transformative artwork for the dining room," says Arent Squadrito. "It echoes the conceptual >



This page in the kitchen, **cabinetry** produced by Adam Standfield Cabinet Making in Dulux Vintage Green; **island** in poplar burl timber veneer produced by Adam Standfield Cabinet Making with Aegean Green marble from Granite Marble Works; **splashback** and **rangehood** in Zellige handmade tiles from Surface Gallery; **cooktop** from Wolf, enquiries to Winning Appliances; **fridge** from Sub Zero, enquiries to Winning Appliances; Diabolo **pendant lights** by Achille Castiglioni for Flos, enquiries to Euroluce; Fredericia Spine wood **stools**, enquiries to Cult.



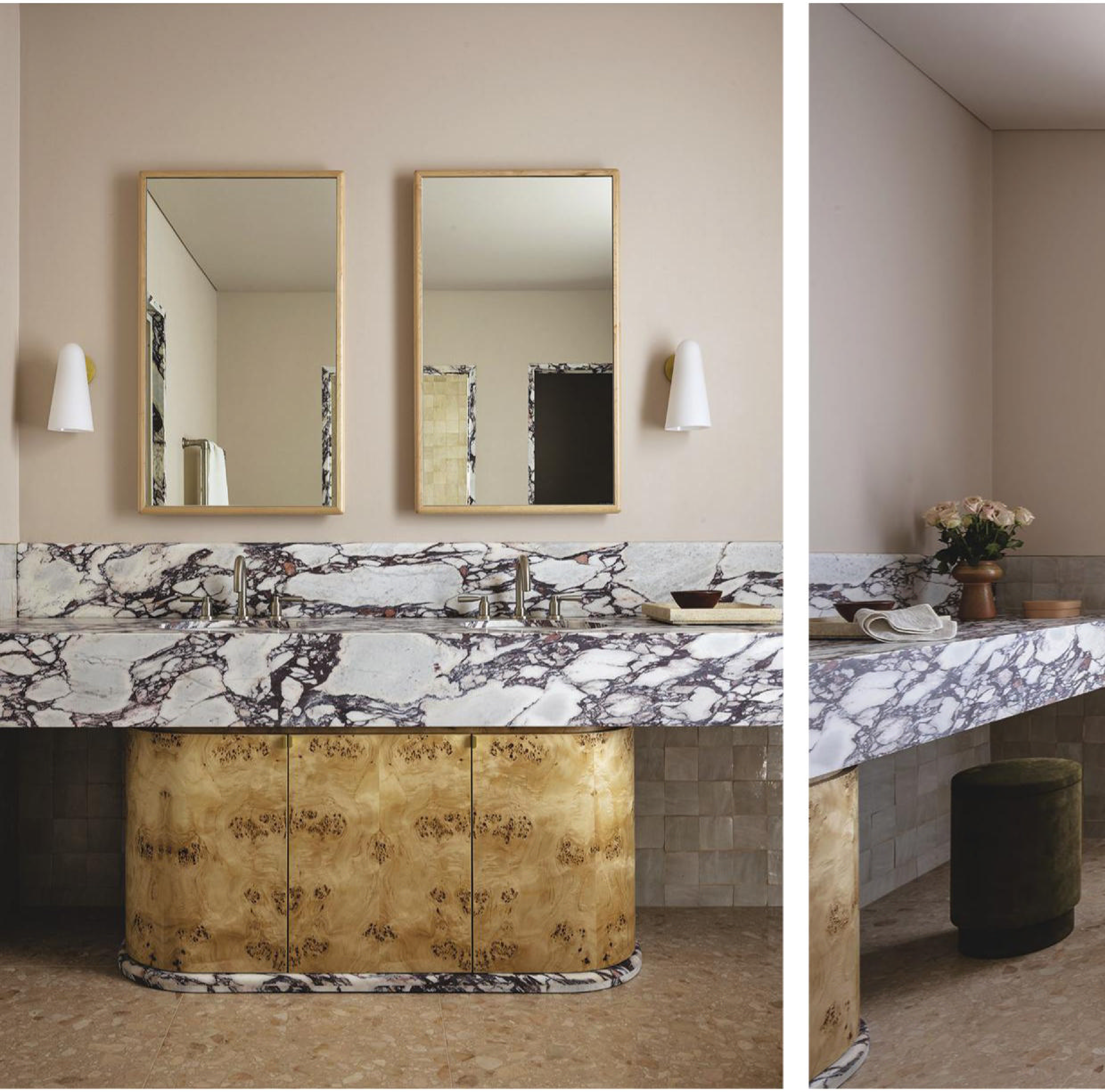
This page, from top left in the main ensuite, with a view of the walk-in robe, Zellige handmade **tiles** from Surface Gallery; **door frame** in Calacatta Viola marble. On the first-floor landing, Womb **chair** by Eero Saarinen for Knoll, enquiries to Dedece, reupholstered in Byram fabric from Kvadrat; IKO2 **side table** by Christophe Delcourt for Delcourt Collection from Ondene; **vase** from Conley & Co; Akari 33N **pendant light** by Isamu Noguchi from In Good Company. *Opposite page* in the dining area, Bramante **console** by Kazuhide Takahama for Cassina, enquiries to Mobilia; Atollo 235 **table lamp** by Vico Magistretti from Euroluce; Collection Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Charlotte Perriand 8 Tabouret tournant **stool** by Charlotte Perriand, enquiries to Mobilia; Concentric **wall sconces** from Allied Maker; **artwork** by Ildiko Kovacs.

< direction for the home, which embodies rich colour and fluidity. The Cassina Bramante console that sits beneath feels like a powerful contrast — they are somehow perfectly suited for one another."

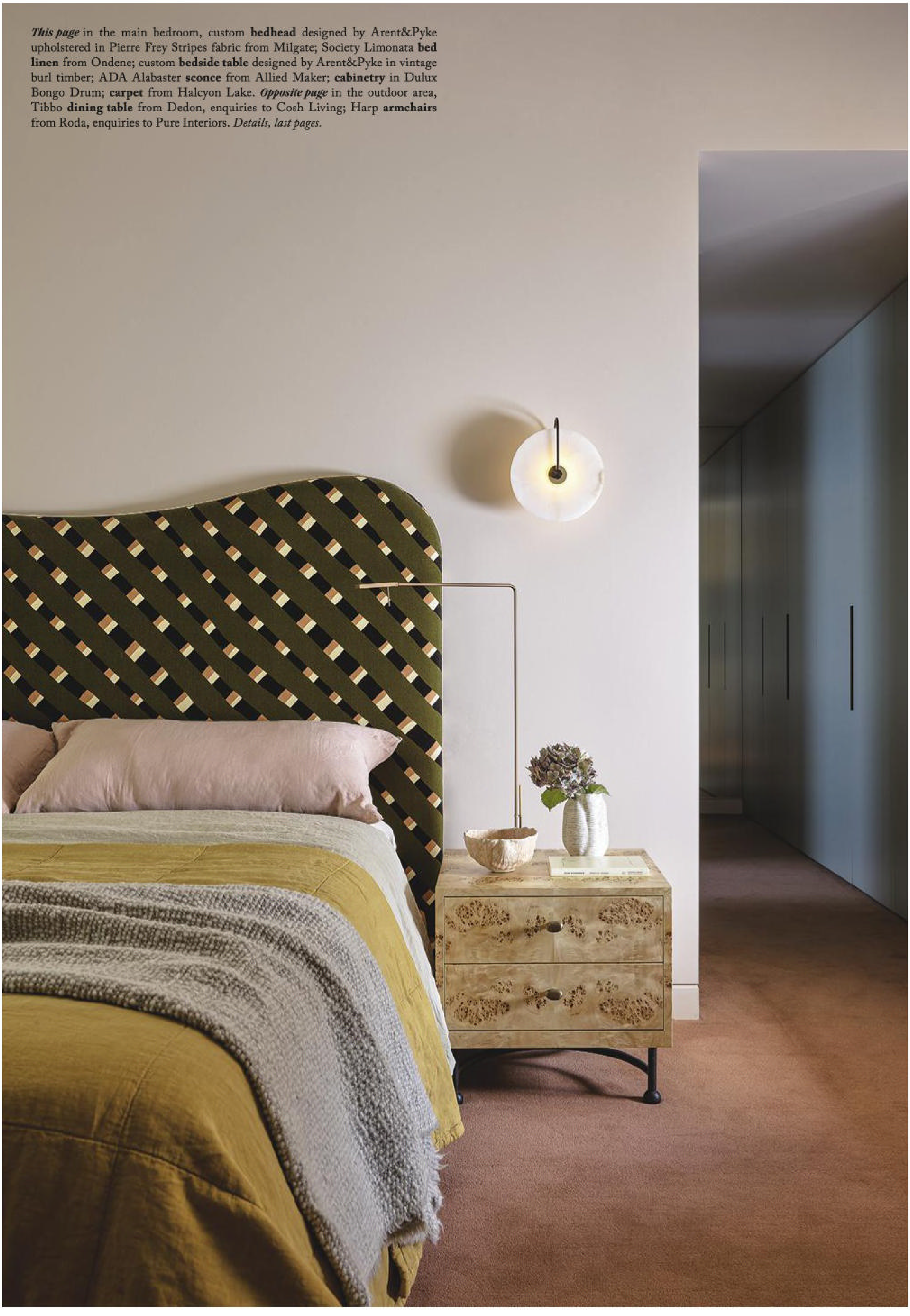
A child's bedroom turned out to be one of the design duo's favourite spaces. "Colour, pattern and playfulness was our brief designing the little girl's bedroom," states Arent Squadrito. "Spoilt for choice, we landed on a fabulous Pierre Frey print, La Toile Du Peintre, for the bedhead. For the finishing touch, we trimmed it with a cobalt-blue brush fringe that matched a contrast band for the curtain treatment." The soft-pink nougat colour palette — which also features on deliciously peachy terrazzo floor tiles in the kitchen — is reflected here in warm-hued bedding and dusky walls and carpet.

Associated with the Art Deco-era, the stippled silkiness of burl veneer also serves to link spaces, appearing in the main bedroom and ensuite. "It gives off a golden glow in the kitchen on the base of the island," says Arent Squadrito. Atop it sits the deep, dark pageantry of a bespoke leathered Verde Guatemala marble worktop, continued into a supporting leg that juts into the room, announcing its presence rather than seeking concealment. "Its rich tone and powerful personality is the perfect anchor for the kitchen."

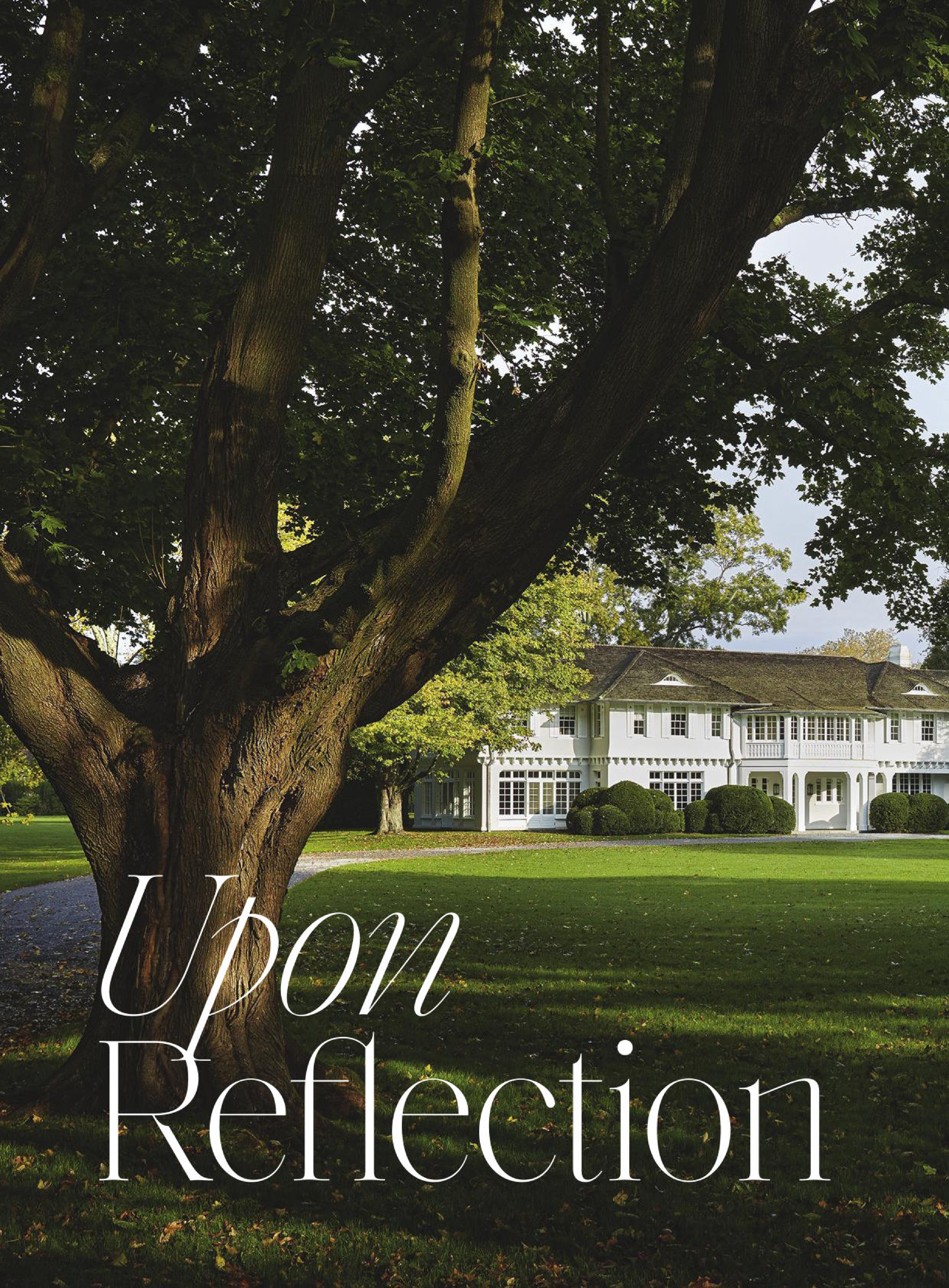
This is a home that reflects the personality of its owners, while welcoming guests into the fold. "In every aspect it feels like a sanctuary," say the owners. "Once you get inside the front door, the world is shut away." VL *arentpyke.com*



These pages, from left in the main ensuite, custom **vanity** produced by Adam Standfield Cabinet Making in Calacatta Viola marble and poplar burl timber veneer; Perrin & Rowe Contemporary **tapware** from The English Tapware Company; custom **mirrors** designed by Arent&Pyke; Domi **wall sconces** from Articolo; The Water Monopoly Paris **bath** from The English Tapware Company; **flooring** in Santa Margherita Terrazzo tiles from Classic Tiles; Tabou **pouf** by Michaël Verheyden from Ondene.



This page in the main bedroom, custom **bedhead** designed by Arent&Pyke upholstered in Pierre Frey Stripes fabric from Milgate; Society Limonata **bed linen** from Ondene; custom **bedside table** designed by Arent&Pyke in vintage burl timber; ADA Alabaster **sconce** from Allied Maker; **cabinetry** in Dulux Bongo Drum; **carpet** from Halcyon Lake. ***Opposite page*** in the outdoor area, Tibbo **dining table** from Dedon, enquiries to Cosh Living; Harp **armchairs** from Roda, enquiries to Pure Interiors. *Details, last pages.*

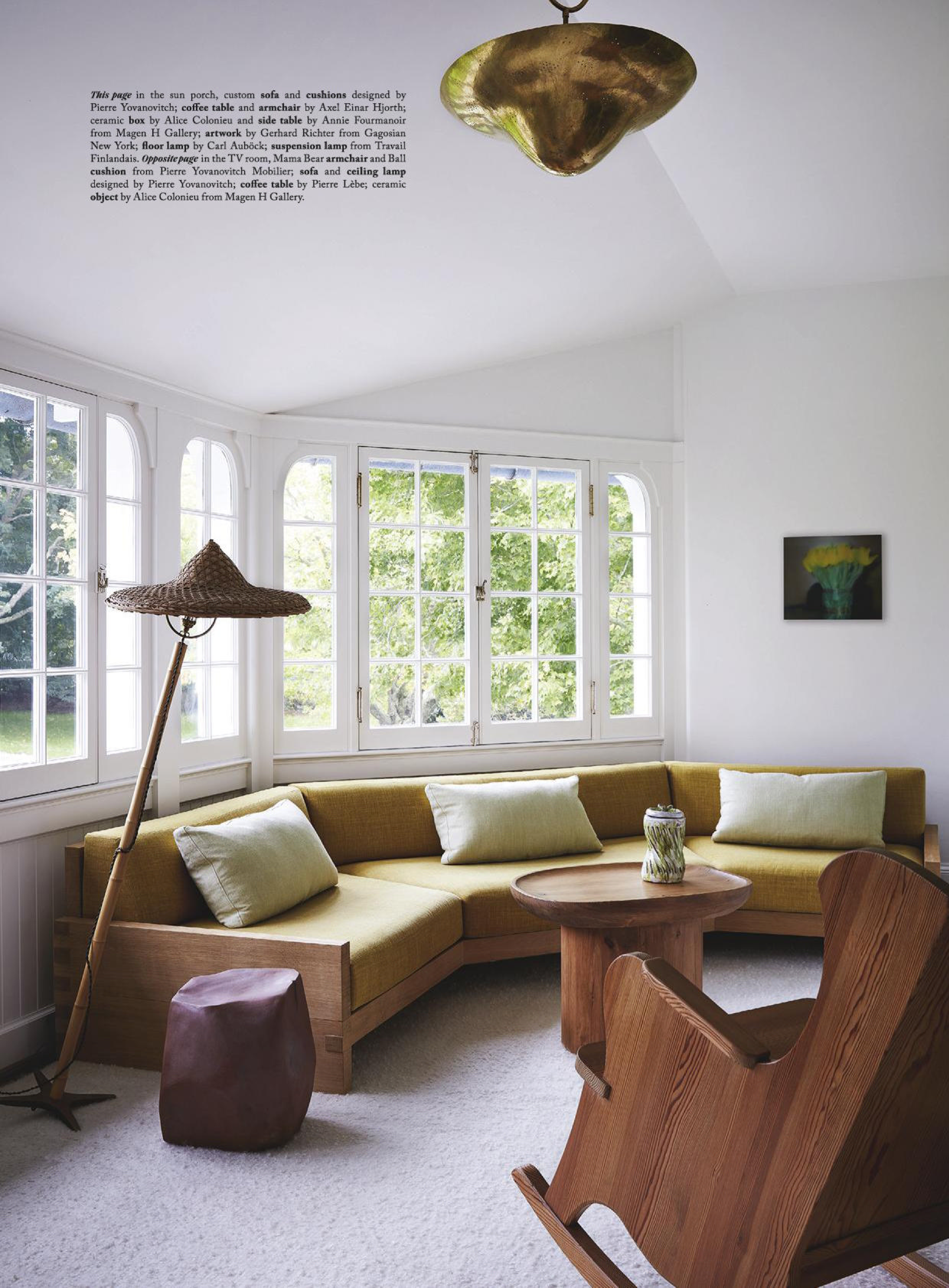


Upon Reflection

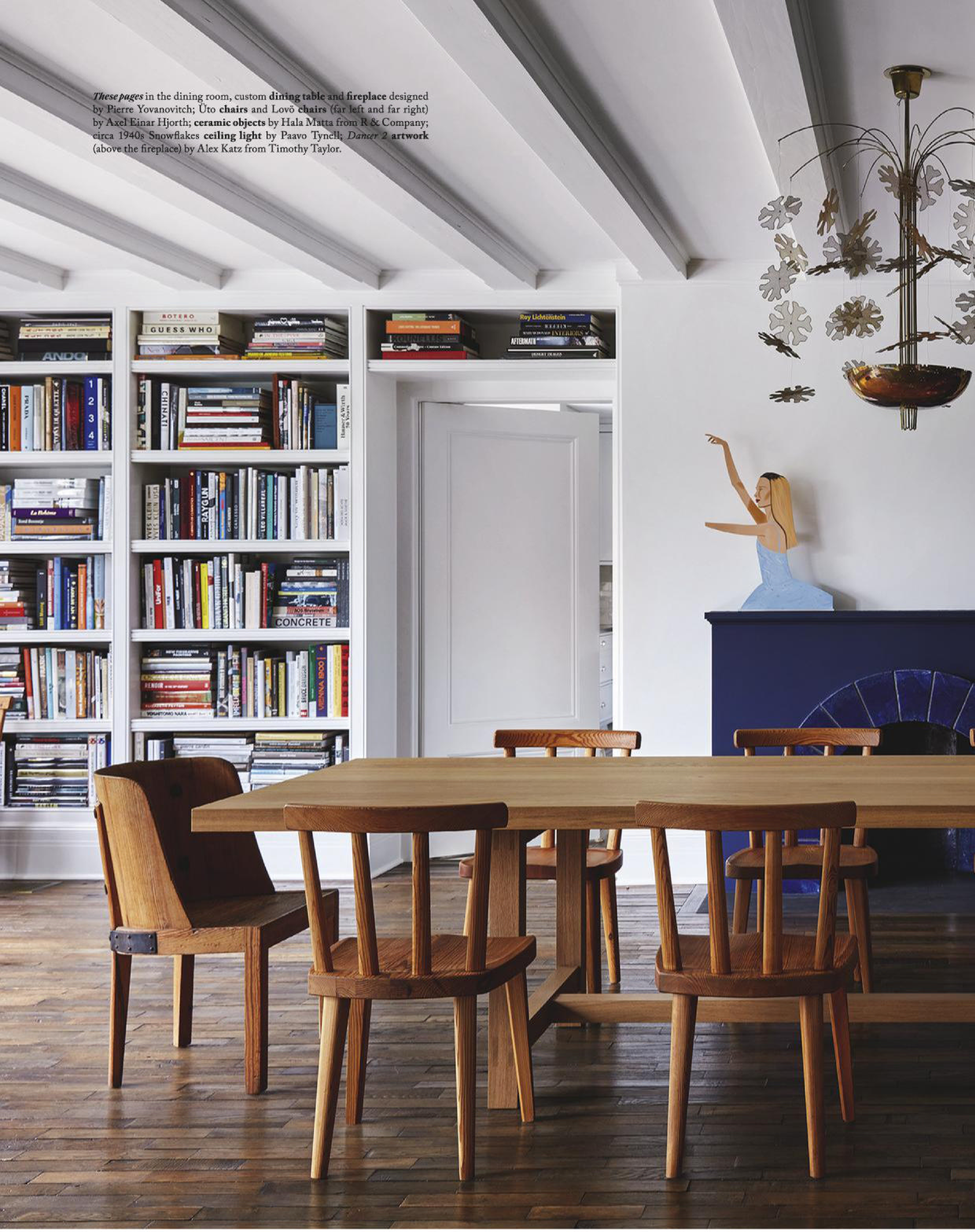
By VIRGINIA JEN *Photographed by* STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON

Once a getaway for a young Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Lasata is now an East Hampton escape enhanced by Pierre Yovanovitch's refined vision.

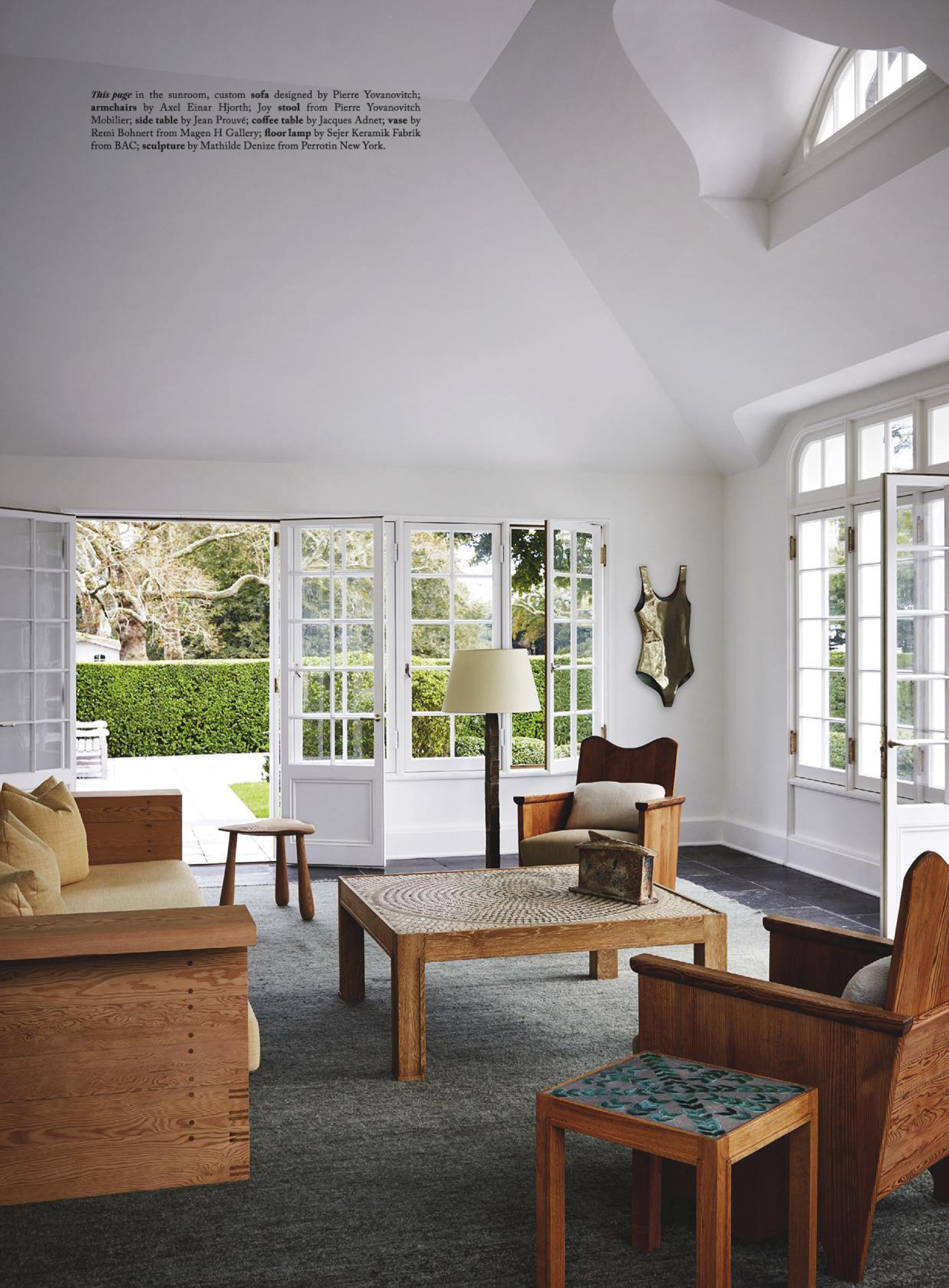
These pages a view of Lasata, now owned by producer David Zander, from the garden; **landscape design** by Louis Benech. *Details, last pages.*



This page in the sun porch, custom **sofa** and **cushions** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; **coffee table** and **armchair** by Axel Einar Hjorth; ceramic **box** by Alice Colonieu and **side table** by Annie Fourmanoir from Magen H Gallery; **artwork** by Gerhard Richter from Gagosian New York; **floor lamp** by Carl Auböck; **suspension lamp** from Travail Finlandais. ***Opposite page*** in the TV room, Mama Bear **armchair** and Ball **cushion** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **sofa** and **ceiling lamp** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; **coffee table** by Pierre Lèbe; ceramic **object** by Alice Colonieu from Magen H Gallery.



These pages in the dining room, custom **dining table** and **fireplace** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; Üto **chairs** and Lovö **chairs** (far left and far right) by Axel Einar Hjorth; **ceramic objects** by Hala Matta from R & Company; circa 1940s Snowflakes **ceiling light** by Paavo Tynell; *Dancer 2* **artwork** (above the fireplace) by Alex Katz from Timothy Taylor.



This page in the sunroom, custom **sofa** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; **armchairs** by Axel Einar Hjorth; Joy **stool** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **side table** by Jean Prouvé; **coffee table** by Jacques Adnet; **vase** by Remi Bohnert from Magen H Gallery; **floor lamp** by Sejer Keramik Fabrik from BAC; **sculpture** by Mathilde Denize from Perrotin New York.

T

The joy of simplicity seems to be a concept that we only grasp at and find harder to achieve nowadays. Perhaps it's our fast-paced world driven by an ever-insatiable appetite for more. But talk to designer Pierre Yovanovitch and time slows a little, the noise dissipates as he goes into considered detail about Lasata — a holiday retreat in East Hamptons, New York, owned by film and television producer David Zander — offering astute insight on a tangible return to simplicity and the welcome respite that comes with it.

Despite the all-American heritage of the grand estate — former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis spent her childhood summers here — Yovanovitch focused more on "the spirit of the home and its classical, simplistic nature that I sought to preserve". "The house is very distinctly American in many ways but our approach to designing the interior was about preserving this essence of refined simplicity," he says.

It was precisely this understanding of a sense of place that drew Zander to reach out to Yovanovitch. "I wanted to make sure that the house was enhanced rather than sublimated," says the homeowner. "I didn't want something put over the top of what it is. It was really about working with the integrity of the house." Yovanovitch notes: "He is a purist in this way."

"He has an unparalleled quality in his work, a subtle combination of organic modernism and traditionalism with his historical references," says Zander of the refined simplicity found in the French interior designer's oeuvre that has seen the former Pierre Cardin menswear designer establish his own interior firms in Paris and New York. "He has such a unique eye and his work is so comprehensive. He thinks about how every material, colour and artwork will work together. I also appreciate that he is not predictable in his approach to designing a space. When I first found out about his work, I saw pictures of his chateau in Provence and that's when I thought 'I want to work with this guy.'"

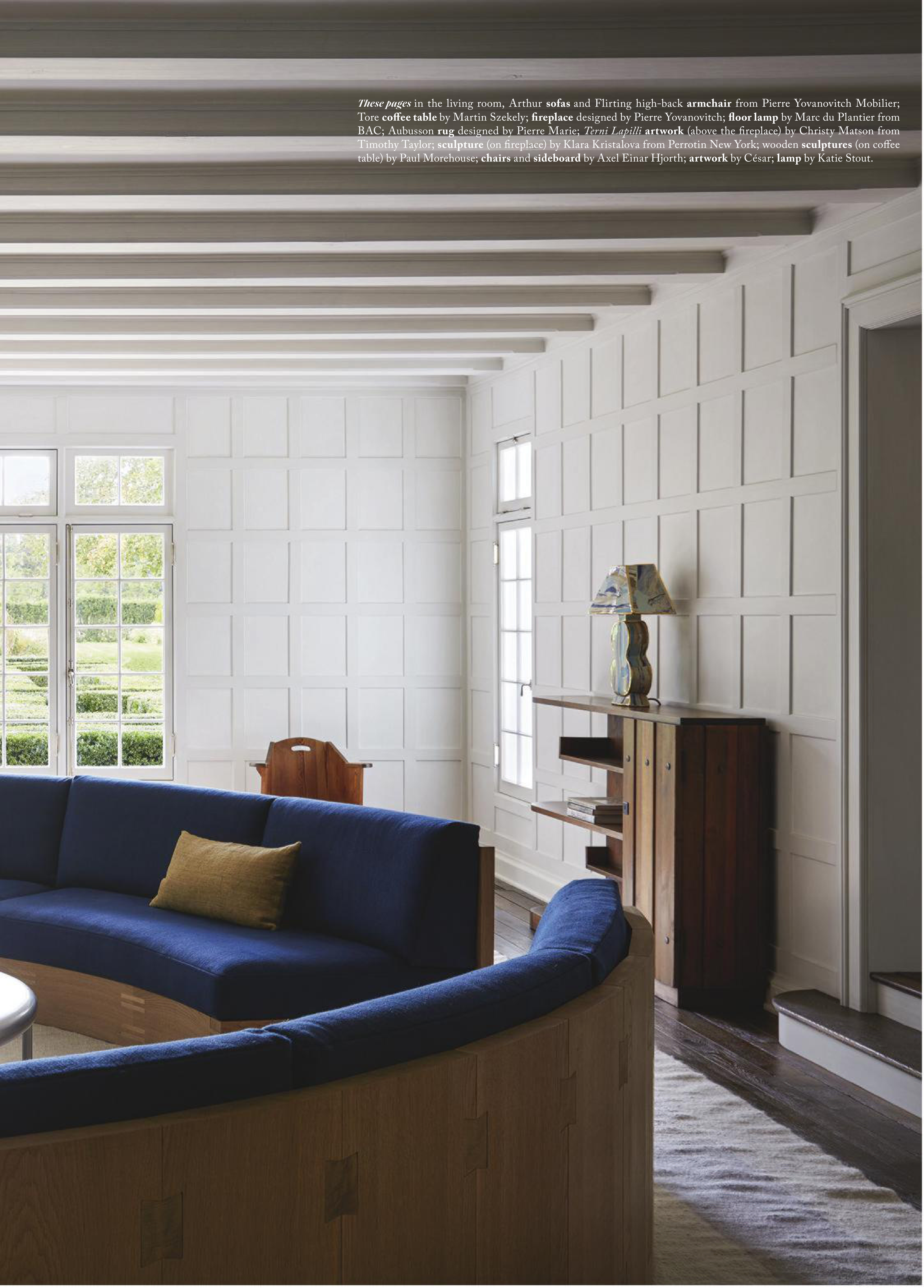
> "Our approach to designing the interior was about preserving this essence of refined simplicity"

While there is a clear synergy between client and designer in respectfully maintaining Lasata, another similarity is the pair's exacting curation in revealing the estate's soul — design enthusiast Zander is an avid vintage furniture collector and Yovanovitch has built his covetable style on his impeccable choice of pieces. "We wanted to bring in special pieces from the early 20th century — radical, minimalistic pieces that were not overly trendy and showcased exceptional craftsmanship and the use of natural materials," says Yovanovitch of his artful selection of such innovators as Jean Touret, Charlotte Perriand, Pierre Chapo and Axel Einar Hjorth, as well his own Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier line, working harmoniously with modern art from such names as Gerhard Richter, Alex Katz and Helen Frankenthaler. These tactfully chosen features are the building blocks of "a simple and warm ambience in the home while also playing up this contrast between the classic style of the house and bold but refined pieces we custom-created," says Yovanovitch. "The overall result is elegant, soft and raw at the same time." And it's perhaps this elemental alchemy, governed by equal parts reasoning and desire that creates visual interest and tactile comfort. "We were very intentional about what was brought into the home with the goal of making it simplistic but also with a strong sense of character," he adds.

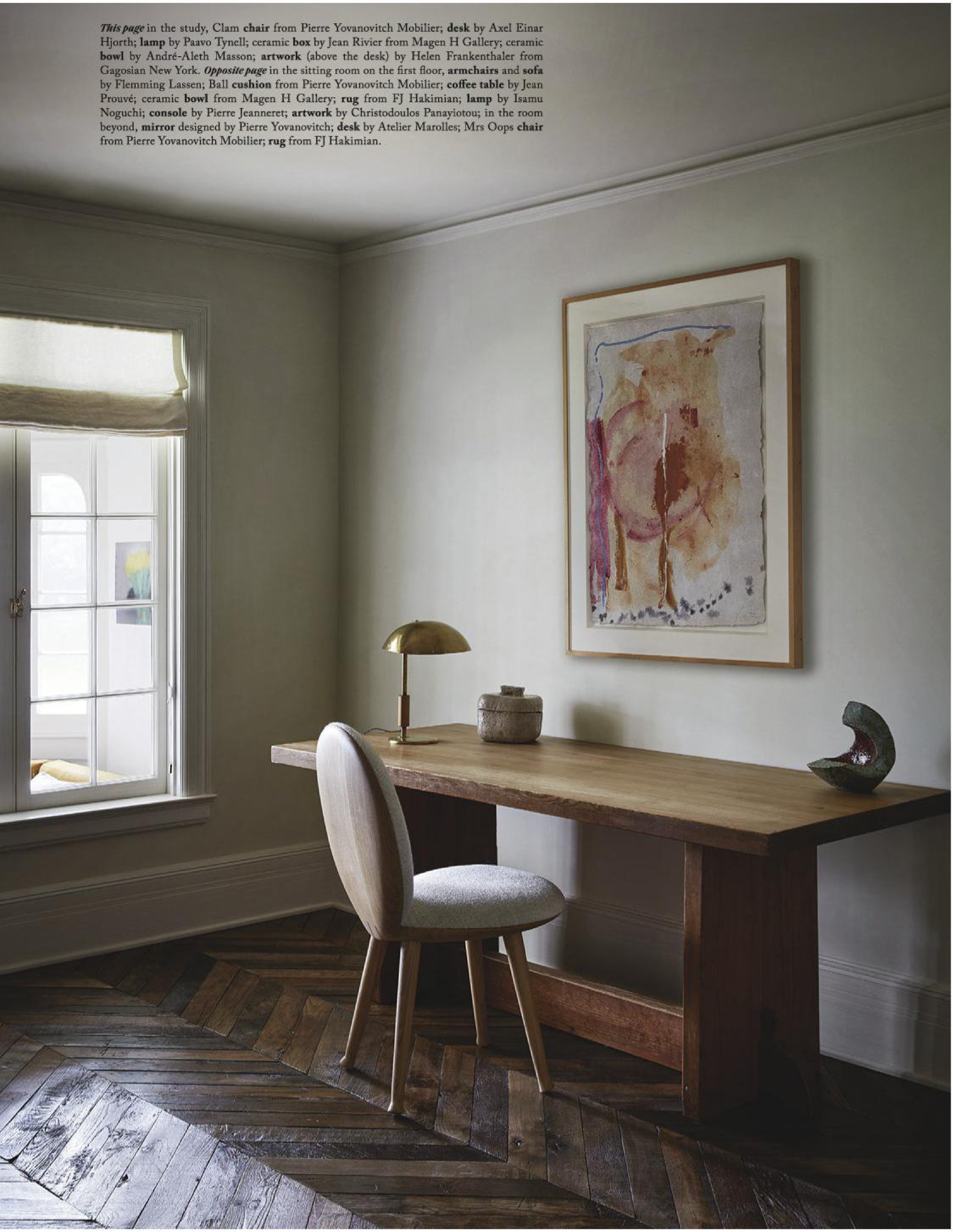
A character that continues to play an intrinsic part in Lasata's story is the gardens. For Yovanovitch, the holistic mapping of plans to harness the estate's original intent started with the verdant grounds. "I was really drawn to the surrounding landscape, in particular the dense Linden trees, when I first saw the property," he says. "The landscape ended up being a through line throughout the project in terms of connecting the interior architecture to the gardens."

The grounds have been manicured with pleasing precision via a meticulous labyrinth layout and bulbous hedges by landscape designer Louis Benech. For Yovanovitch, who has known Benech for years, "collaborating with him was a very natural, symbiotic process". Lasata's generous windows allow storybook-perfect greenery to link with the welcoming interiors while also directly influencing them. "I chose to bring in a lot of natural materials, raw woods, strong organic fabrics with rich colours to complement the panoramic views of the exterior," says Yovanovitch. "I wanted the interior to be a reflective, peaceful place to admire the outdoor view in this way."

Peace is a defining trait of Lasata. In fact, it's in its very name; Lasata is a Native American term translating to 'place of peace'. When quizzed about what he believes a retreat is, Yovanovitch takes pause to answer with the necessary contemplation. "The idea of a retreat can be quite subjective, but in my experience it is space for quiet reflection and recharging and also for lighthearted imagination," he says. "I like to bring in design and art pieces which tell a story and add character to a room so that the space can bring inspiration and levity to the homeowner." The equation is disarmingly easy then: pare it back, add in an interior scheme reflective of the owner complemented by tone, highlight and divide up views of natural surroundings to strike the right balance of tranquillity and warmth. Just keep it simple, and a sanctuary of one's own may be within reach. **VL** *pierreyovanovitch.com*

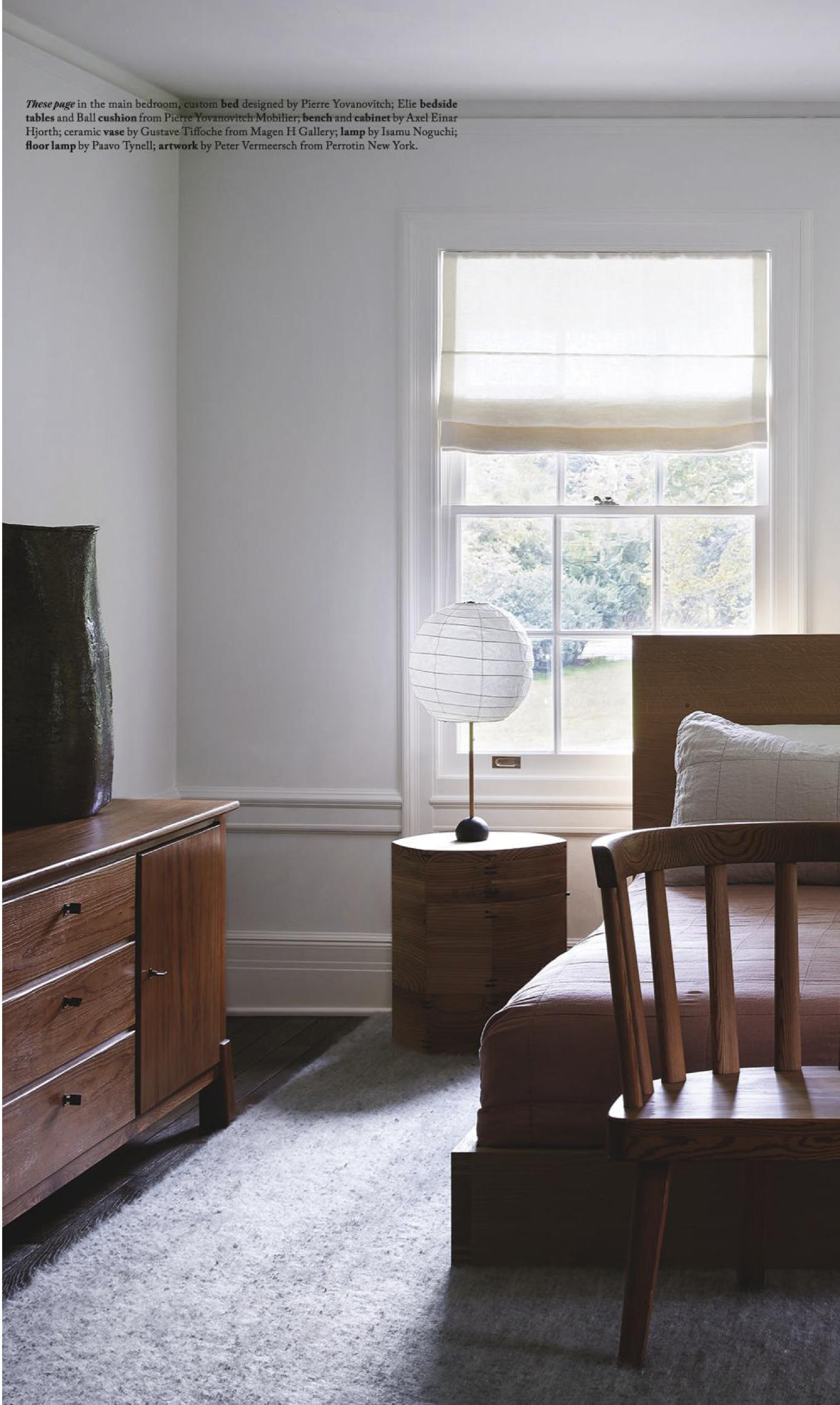


These pages in the living room, Arthur **sofas** and Flirting high-back **armchair** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; Tore **coffee table** by Martin Szekely; **fireplace** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; **floor lamp** by Marc du Plantier from BAC; Aubusson **rug** designed by Pierre Marie; *Terni Lapilli* **artwork** (above the fireplace) by Christy Matson from Timothy Taylor; **sculpture** (on fireplace) by Klara Kristalova from Perrotin New York; wooden **sculptures** (on coffee table) by Paul Morehouse; **chairs** and **sideboard** by Axel Einar Hjorth; **artwork** by César; **lamp** by Katie Stout.

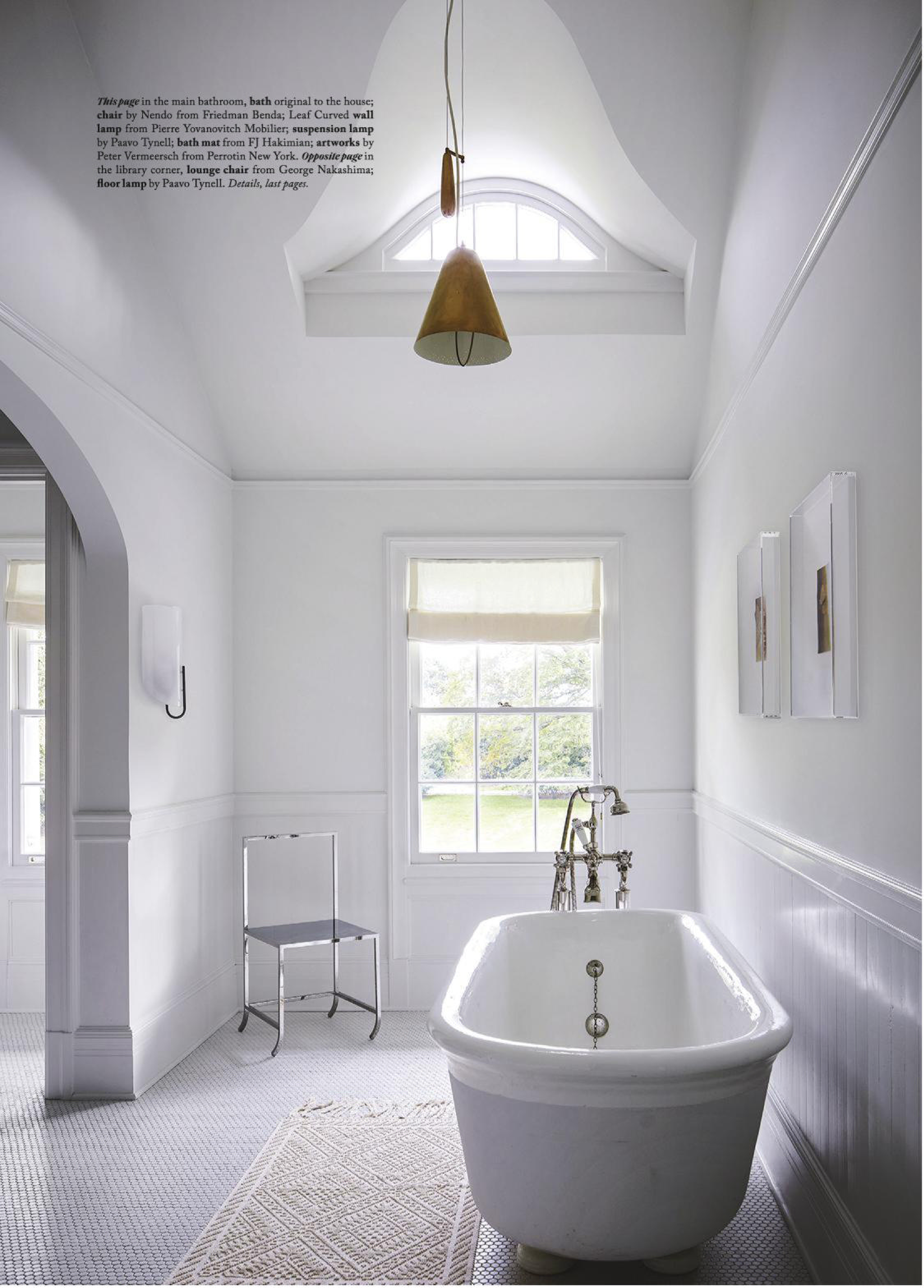


This page in the study, Clam **chair** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **desk** by Axel Einar Hjorth; **lamp** by Paavo Tynell; ceramic **box** by Jean Rivier from Magen H Gallery; ceramic **bowl** by André-Aleth Masson; **artwork** (above the desk) by Helen Frankenthaler from Gagosian New York. ***Opposite page*** in the sitting room on the first floor, **armchairs** and **sofa** by Flemming Lassen; Ball **cushion** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **coffee table** by Jean Prouvé; ceramic **bowl** from Magen H Gallery; **rug** from FJ Hakimian; **lamp** by Isamu Noguchi; **console** by Pierre Jeanneret; **artwork** by Christodoulos Panayiotou; in the room beyond, **mirror** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; **desk** by Atelier Marolles; Mrs Oops **chair** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **rug** from FJ Hakimian.

FRANÇOIS HALARD
DOIG
BIRTH OF THE COOL
KURT VONNEGUT



These page in the main bedroom, custom **bed** designed by Pierre Yovanovitch; Elie **bedside tables** and Ball **cushion** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **bench** and **cabinet** by Axel Einar Hjorth; ceramic **vase** by Gustave Tiffoche from Magen H Gallery; **lamp** by Isamu Noguchi; **floor lamp** by Paavo Tynell; **artwork** by Peter Vermeersch from Perrotin New York.



This page in the main bathroom, **bath** original to the house; **chair** by Nendo from Friedman Benda; Leaf Curved **wall lamp** from Pierre Yovanovitch Mobilier; **suspension lamp** by Paavo Tynell; **bath mat** from FJ Hakimian; **artworks** by Peter Vermeersch from Perrotin New York. ***Opposite page*** in the library corner, **lounge chair** from George Nakashima; **floor lamp** by Paavo Tynell. *Details, last pages.*

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Relax and entertain in your outdoor spaces with refreshing drinks close to hand, thanks to the Husky 190L Double Door Alfresco Bar Fridge. Made from stainless steel and with double-glazed glass doors, it's designed to keep its cool in temperatures up to 43°C. The adjustable chrome shelves allow you to easily store bottles of varying shapes and sizes, while a range of 1-8°C means the fridge can be set to the optimal temperature for the beverages being stored.

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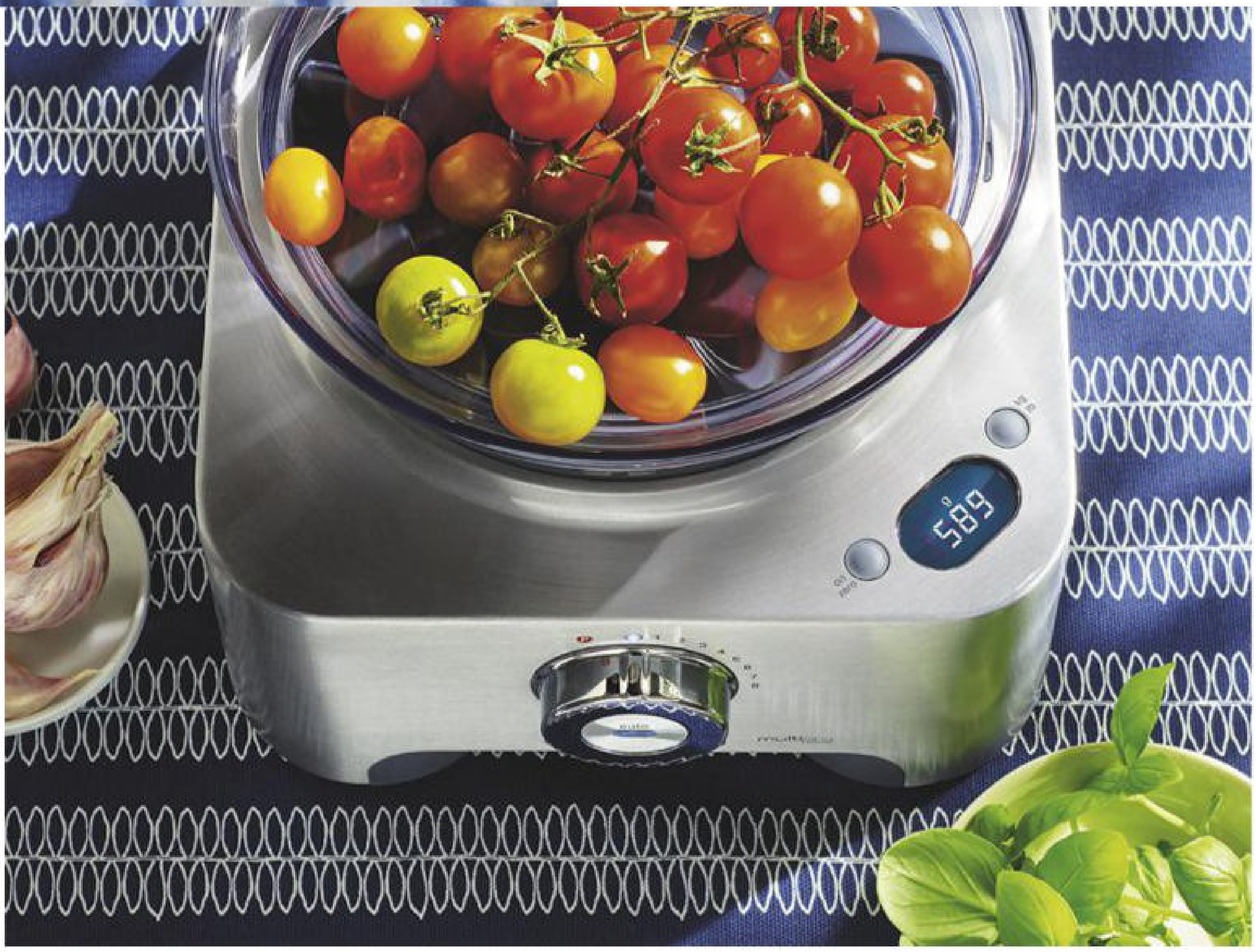
A homemade dressing is the best way to make simple salads irresistible – and they're easier than ever to whip up with the Kenwood MultiPro Excel Food Processor. An integrated digital scale (pictured below) and detachable dishwasher-safe accessories will help save cooking and cleaning time.

FIND THIS HEIRLOOM TOMATO SALAD WITH SMOKY ROMESCO SAUCE RECIPE AT HN.COM.AU/RECIPES

GREATEST BLITZ

Weigh, chop, slice, blend, juice, knead, grate, whisk, mill and more with this all-in-one powerhouse. With its Tritan four-litre bowl, multi-speed functionality and integrated digital scale (pictured right), the Kenwood MultiPro Excel Food Processor makes short work of a huge range of recipes. The ThermoResist glass blending jug has a 1.5-litre capacity, and accessories include extra-strong grating and slicing discs, julienne and crinkle-cut discs, dough and whisk tools, a citrus press and more.

KENWOOD MULTIPRO EXCEL FOOD PROCESSOR, FPM910, $549.



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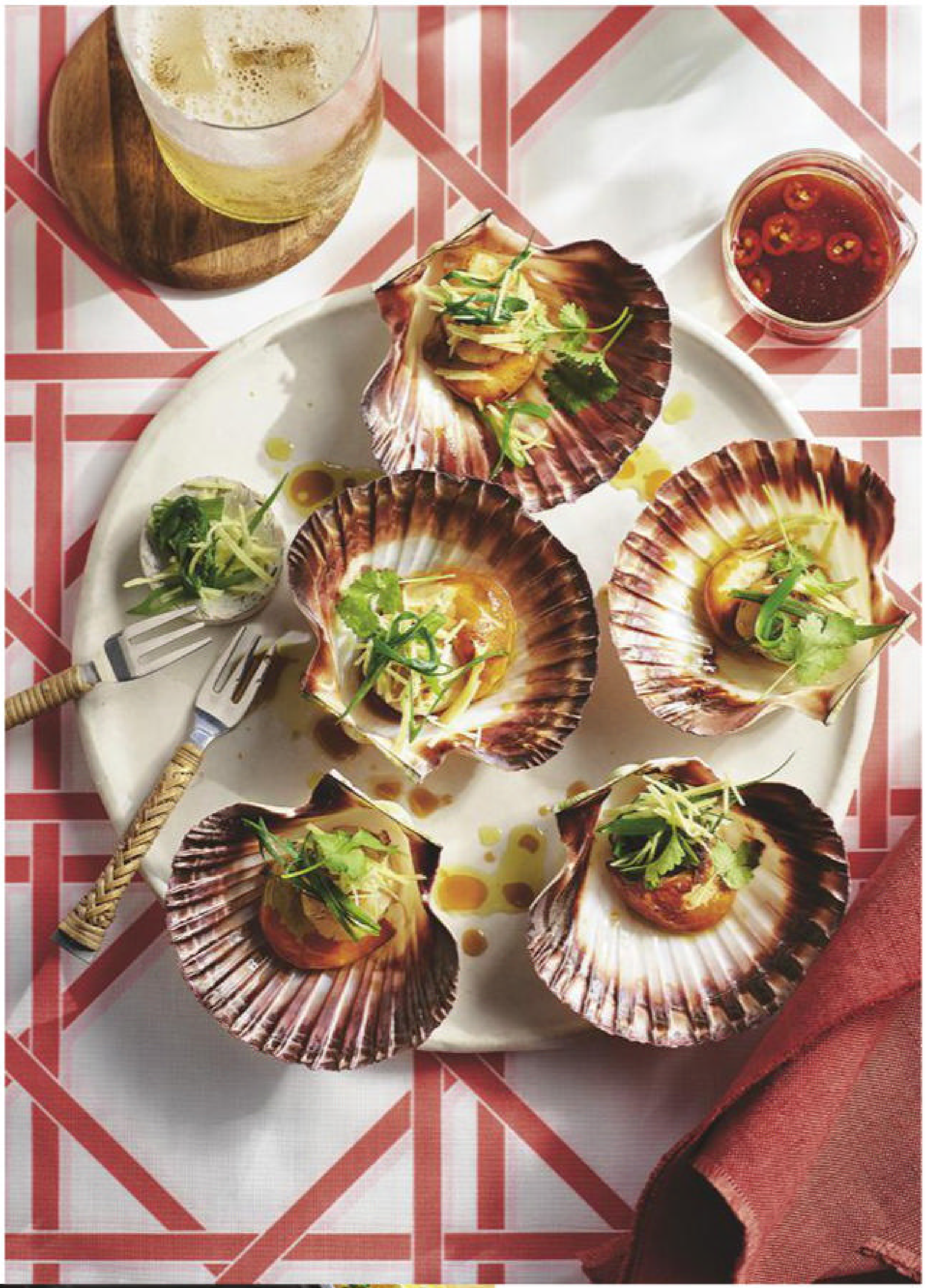

SEAFOOD SPECIALS

It's not an Australian summer without a barbie and, while the whole point is to keep it easy, there's no reason it can't also be gourmet. Take your pick of fresh local seafood and get inspired by the cooking options on offer with the Oklahoma Joe's Longhorn Combo Charcoal/Gas Smoker and Grill.

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GRILL SEEKER

Take your barbecues to the next level with this multi-purpose smoker and grill. Featuring charcoal and gas grill chambers plus an attached firebox, the Oklahoma Joe's Longhorn Combo Charcoal/Gas Smoker and Grill allows you to choose the perfect cooking option for the job at hand. Features such as a durable steel construction, integrated temperature gauges, and adjustable dampers to regulate heat and smoke, help make barbecuing easy and fuss free – as it should be.

OKLAHOMA JOE'S LONGHORN COMBO CHARCOAL/GAS SMOKER AND GRILL, 20209029, $1,499 (BARBECUE PLATE, GAS BOTTLE AND ACCESSORIES NOT INCLUDED).

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ALL THINGS ICE

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FIND RECIPES FOR SHAVED ICE WITH HIBISCUS AND PASSIONFRUIT SYRUPS AT HN.COM.AU/RECIPES

SUMMER'S POWER COUPLE

Handy for everything from whipping up the lightest pavlova to kneading the heaviest dough, the KitchenAid Stand Mixer is an established go-to for any home cook. Add the KitchenAid Shave Ice attachment (sold separately) for even more versatility. With two blades – one for a fine, snow-like texture, one for a coarser hand-shaved-style result – and the ability to make more than 500ml of finely shaved ice in 60 seconds, it's a must-have for creating frosty treats.

KITCHENAID KSM195 STAND MIXER IN ALMOND CREAM, $849. KITCHENAID SHAVE ICE ATTACHMENT, 5KSMSIA, $169.

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BREW

IT'S EASY TO ENJOY BARISTA-STYLE HOT AND COLD BREWS AT HOME WITH THIS CLEVER MACHINE

SLICE OF HEAVEN

There aren't many simple pleasures that can compete with a coffee made just the way you like it, and the Jura Z10 Automatic Coffee Machine makes it easier than ever to get it right every time. Whether it's your go-to morning fix, an iced treat or an espresso shot for a recipe, it'll be fast, simple and delicious.

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Prepare barista-worthy cold brews and iced coffees as well as all your favourite hot drinks at the touch of a button with the Jura Z10 Automatic Coffee Machine. A cold extraction process that pulses cool water through the beans under high pressure ensures balanced and full-bodied cold brews, and the machine's 32 recipes, 10 programmable coffee strength levels and 10 milk foam temperature levels mean it can make the perfect brew for even the most discerning coffee connoisseurs.

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Unbreakable *Bond*

Kisawa Sanctuary doesn't only just declare Mozambique as a gateway to an abundance of wildlife; it also showcases a sustainably minded way to travel that is intrinsically linked to and proudly celebrates its community and heritage.

By VIRGINIA JEN
Photographed by ELSA YOUNG

These pages Bungalow 14 — otherwise known as Kisawa Residence — is surrounded by sweeping white sand dunes and large lala palm trees.

W

With its 11 bungalow residences all idyllically situated on a stretch of the pristine sands of Benguerra Island, 14 kilometres off the coast of Mozambique in south-eastern Africa, Kisawa Sanctuary could, at first glance, be seen as just a luxury resort offering. But for founder, creative director and philanthropist Nina Flohr, what has driven her in creating this oasis that opened in late 2021 is the desire for the country's natural gifts to be seen and showcased. "I have spent many years travelling throughout Africa," she says. "There is an abundance of beautiful mainland safaris yet few island escapes where the marine biodiversity is as rich and untouched as in Mozambique. Together with its incredible people and vivid culture, Mozambique felt like the right place to introduce Kisawa Sanctuary. I have rarely seen a country so humble and rooted in tradition but also so innovative and embracing of new ideas."

This willingness to do things differently yet with respect to the past has given way to a holiday stay that works within and harnesses the delicate balance of a unique ecosystem. Kisawa's design DNA is grounded by minimal disruption to the existing environment, blending in from construction to finishing touches. Artisans from Benguerra and nearby islands made up 80 per cent of the workforce that constructed the dwellings using traditional techniques such as weaving, thatching and carpentry but also by pushing the boundaries. The tactile, gently curved roofs of the residences and sliding door panels are formed from woven grass while wooden decorative items are made from remnant construction materials by Kisawa's resident craftsperson Andre Antonio Zivane. The inception of Kisawa even led Flohr to establishing her own in-house design studio NJF where she works with design experts on a holistic brand of considered hospitality from minute detail to long-range vision.

A tangible sense of place and respectful preservation of skill and craft is the big-picture brief for Kisawa. Furniture is crafted from jambir and sambiri woods, brass and marble surfaces add polish to proceedings and vintage treasures are sourced from around Africa, including antiques and art from Senegal and Ghana. This highly >

This page Residence 5 has views of the cove side of the bay. ***Opposite page*** another view of Kisawa Residence featuring antiques, including an early 20th-century Ethiopian leather daybed, collected by founder Nina Flohr on her travels across Africa.

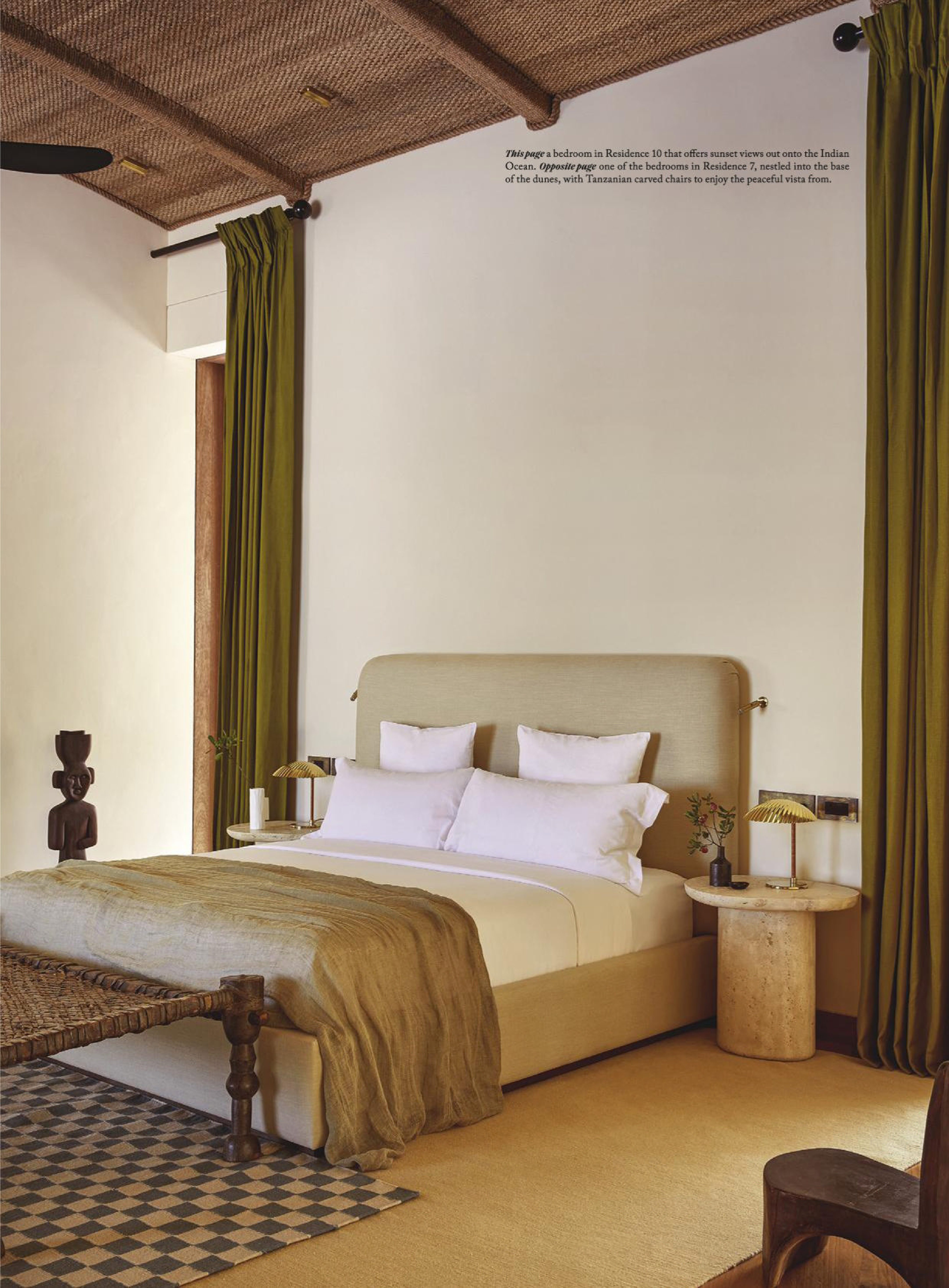
This page central to the cove side of the lagoon is Residence 7, the property's three-bedroom suite. ***Opposite page*** another view of Residence 5 with a look into the bathroom, leading through the bedroom and into the living room.

< focused approach means no two residences are the same, with the combination of elements a result of instinct and observation. The interiors exhibit the same harmonious rhythm of Mozambique. “It is a place you have to visit to appreciate the beauty of the environment; be that the expanse of the white sandy beaches, the number of bird species or the volume of diverse flora and fauna,” says Flohr.

The ultimate driver behind Kisawa, which means unbreakable in a local dialect, is Flohr’s determination to make a purposeful commitment to research in preserving and protecting the natural world. A feather-light footprint on the environment is something that’s important to Flohr and a year into Kisawa’s life, that dedication is unwavering. “We continue our commitment to ocean research through the symbiotic partnership between Kisawa and its sister property, Bazaruto Centre for Scientific Studies [BCSS]. With these two initiatives we have created a sustainable business model, whereby for-profit hospitality contributes directly to non-profit marine research and Africa’s first ocean observatory,” she says.

“The knowledge generated by the BCSS team informs the environmental decisions of Kisawa Sanctuary on a regular basis.” Flohr continues. “This ranges from early construction and design choices to better protect the surrounding environment, to daily ocean awareness updates, as well as elevated Kisawa marine activities that are meaningful and memorable for our guests. We have coined this relationship, ‘resort to research’ and it is an authentic, active relationship that allows for the existence of BCSS’s innovative platform.”

Kisawa’s investment in the future means resort activities such as snorkelling, kayaking, sailing or morning yoga in its calm surrounds may just hit a little differently and hold a little more significance. VL *kisawasanctuary.com*



This page a bedroom in Residence 10 that offers sunset views out onto the Indian Ocean. ***Opposite page*** one of the bedrooms in Residence 7, nestled into the base of the dunes, with Tanzanian carved chairs to enjoy the peaceful vista from.

Clockwise from below left Pure Gold Radiance Nocturnal revitalising **night balm**, $1400, from La Prairie; *laprairie.com* Toquilla panama and swift calfskin **hat**, $2875, from Hermès; *hermes.com* Hobo Knot **bag**, $7530, from Bottega Veneta; *bottegaveneta.com* Summer Fridays Lip Butter **balm** in Poppy, $35, from Mecca; *mecca.com.au* Loewe asymmetric printed stretch-crepe maxi **dress**, $1850, from Net-A-Porter; *net-a-porter.com*

Clockwise from left Tank Française **watch** in Yellow Gold, $31,500, from Cartier; *cartier.com.au* The Eye Concentrate **eye treatment**, $370, from La Mer; *cremedelamer.com.au* Tiffany Edge Hoop **earrings** in Platinum and Yellow Gold with Diamonds, $18.200, from Tiffany & Co.; *tiffany.com.au* Helmet **bag**, $5320, from Bottega Veneta; *bottegaveneta.com*

The VZ Edit

A curated hit list of refined accessories for those who travel in style, from top to toe.

Clockwise from above left Amouage Opus XII Rose Incense **eau de parfum**, $499, from Libertine Parfumerie; *libertineparfumerie.com.au* Sublimage L'Extrait intensive repair **oil concentrate**, $754, from Chanel; *chanel.com* Clifton medium **suitcase** in Ochre, $754, from Antler; *antler.com.au* Sulwhasoo concentrated ginseng **serum**, $89 for 15ml, from Sephora; *sephora.com.au*

Clockwise from left H passerelle hand-woven cashmere **blanket**, $5620; Suede goatskin **sandals**, $1115, and Magellan portable mahogany and printed swift calfskin **blackgammon set**, $10,515, all from Hermès; *hermes.com*

COMPILED BY: SANDY DAO

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Save your favourite order with the one-touch menu.

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EXPAND YOUR REPERTOIRE

Chances are you've already picked your favourite when it comes to your coffee order. Most of us remain loyal to our latte early on, but if you're keen and curious enough to experiment and maybe even up your coffee IQ, you might be surprised by the results.

De'Longhi's new Eletta Explore is the perfect way to try all kinds of coffee options. The premium machine comes equipped with more than 40 one-touch recipes, so you can pinpoint whether you do, in fact, want to stick with your standard cappuccino, add flair to your flat white or court a cortado.

The perfect at-home coffee is typically a balance between taste and convenience. The De'Longhi Eletta Explore means it's no longer an either/or proposition. The self-cleaning cycles and dishwasher-safe parts allow for quick maintenance and next to no effort. There's also one-touch grinding, dosing and brewing, so all you have to do is pick your favourite beans and the machine does the rest. Skip the cafe queues and save the paper cups – De'Longhi's Eletta Explore boasts serious smarts that'll bring your coffee experience to new heights.

ELETTA
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GET YOUR IDEAS BREWING

Discover a wide variety of coffee flavours with the new Eletta Explore – the first automatic coffee machine to offer more than 40 customisable hot and iced coffee recipes – at the touch of a button.

FRESHLY GROUND COFFEE

With the Eletta Explore one-touch menu, you can grind, dose and brew with ease. Simply add your favourite coffee beans and the integrated grinder and brew unit will extract the perfect aroma and flavour for your coffee order, effortlessly and consistently.

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Personalise to your taste. With a colour display and soft-touch menu, exploring and selecting the perfect coffee has never been so easy. Save your favourites for quick, convenient access.

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This page the main living area of Luca Bombassei's Salento home in Italy. For details, turn to page 110 for the full story.

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PHOTOGRAPHER: ANDREA FERRARI

POSTSCRIPT

From inside to out, update your home in style with these must-haves.

OUT & ABOUT

Ethically sourced A-grade teak forms the streamlined design of Coco Republic's Sardinia outdoor sofa and occasional chair. Woven detailing lends a textural contrast to the furniture's timeless appeal and provides durability for alfresco living. Down-to-earth yet polished, the range is available in natural or black to suit your style. Find out more at cocorepublic.com.au

ART AND SOUL

The exclusive distributor for The Rug Company's luxury floorcoverings in Australia, The Green Room can also help you design and create your own bespoke rug. Get in touch with its in-house design team or discover The Rug Company's highly sought-after designs at thegreenroom.com.au

DISH IT UP

Smeg is known for stylish, cleverly engineered appliances, and the Diamond series dishwashers are testament to this. The exclusive Planetary Wash system ensures a thorough, energy-efficient clean every time. Go to smeg.com.au/dishwashers for details.

THE BOLD TYPE

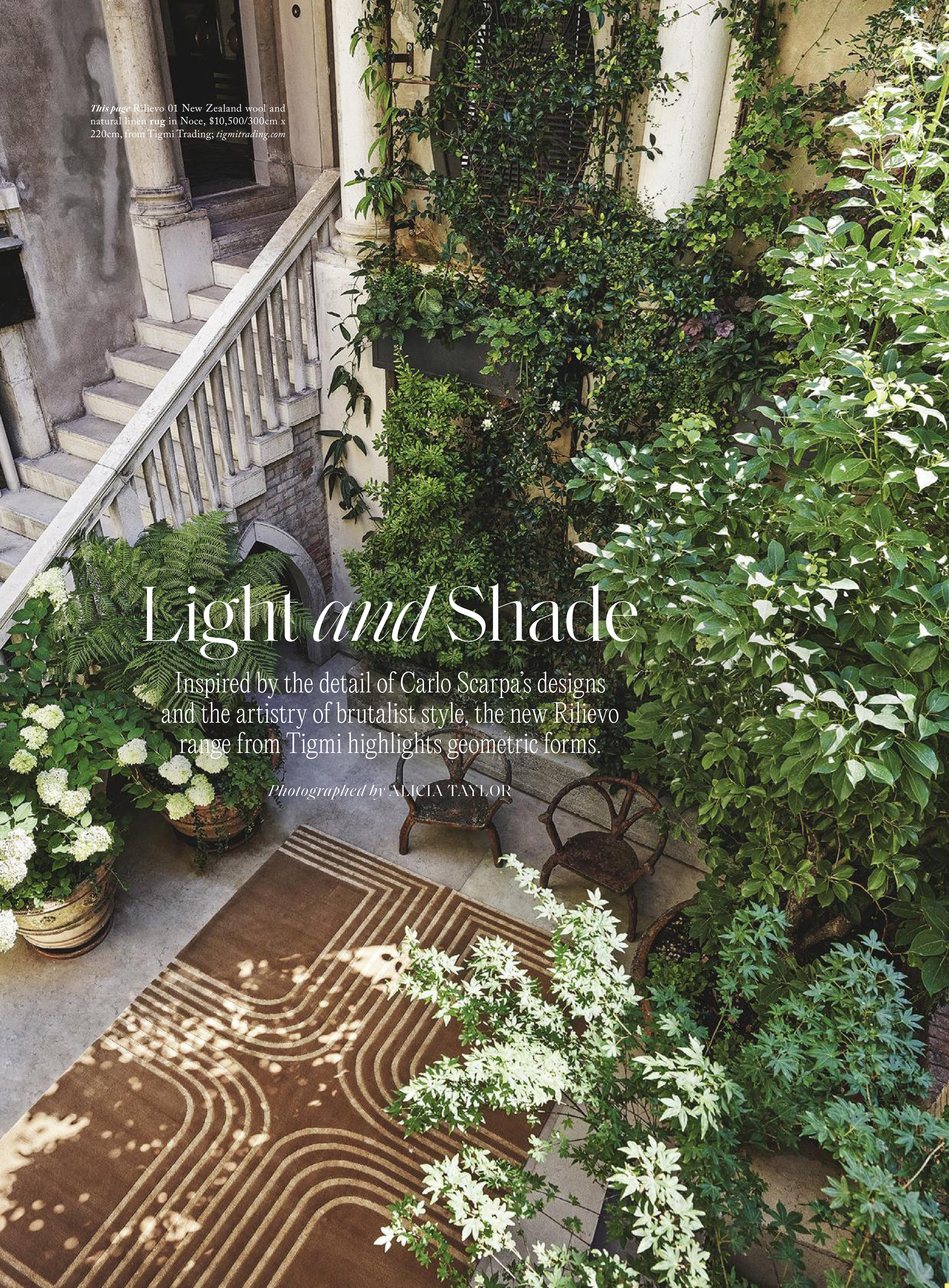
Give your bathroom a statement revamp by enlisting standout colours for your basin or sink. Parisi's Nuda collection demonstrates the perfect marriage between soft, elegant lines and strong, confident hues as seen in this Nuda Flat Wall Hung Basin. "These luxe products deserve to be the statement pieces in a bathroom, so pare the tiles and tapware back and keep them monochromatic so they aren't competing for attention," says Franco Parisi. For details, visit parisi.com.au

ADVENTURE AWAITS

From once-in-a-lifetime experiences in breathtaking destinations to personalised service and ultra-plush suites, a Seabourn expedition voyage is cruising with a luxurious touch. Destinations include Antarctica and South America, the Amazon and Iceland, Greenland and the Northwest Passage. Lay your head in well-appointed suites, sample culinary delights from renowned chefs, and revel in curated experiences that create life-long memories. Discover and choose your next adventure at seabourn.com

AT FIRST SIGHT

Quality Italian craftsmanship is at the heart of the Romeo sofa from Flexform. Elegant lines and sophisticated details, such as cushion piping, just-right proportions and ideal seat inclination makes this expertly designed piece a must for any living space. A true archetype of Flexform's design ingenuity, the versatile piece comes in a range of sizes, configurations and fabrics, so whether your style is minimalist or classic, there's a Romeo that's a perfect match for your aesthetic. Find out more information at fanuli.com.au



This page Rilievo 01 New Zealand wool and natural linen **rug** in Noce, $10,500/300cm x 220cm, from Tigmi Trading; *tigmitrading.com*

Light *and* Shade

Inspired by the detail of Carlo Scarpa's designs and the artistry of brutalist style, the new Rilievo range from Tigmi highlights geometric forms.

Photographed by ALICIA TAYLOR

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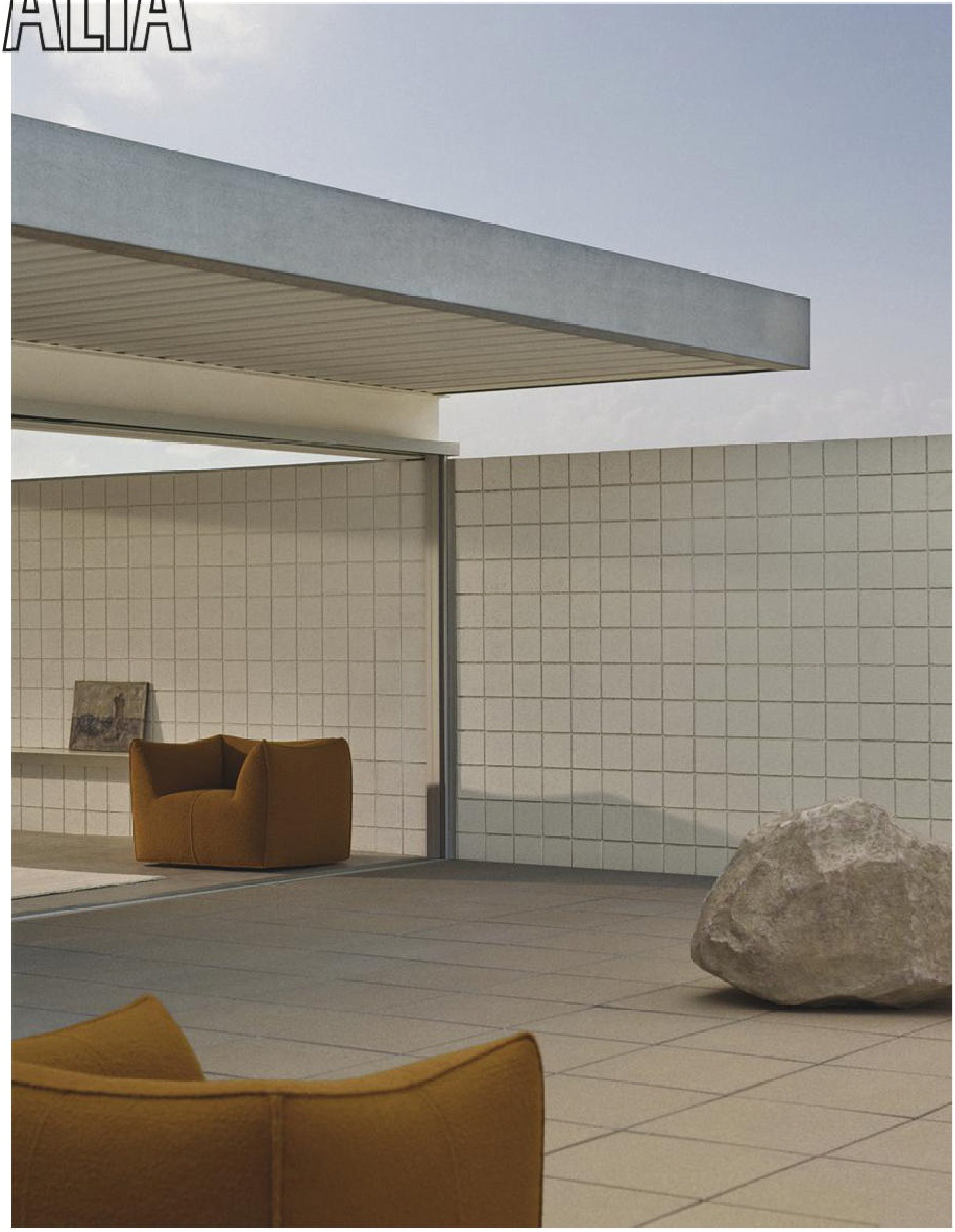

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